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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE NEATBY DEBATE AND CONSERVATIVE THOUGHT IN CANADA

BY

CAMPBELL A. ROSS ©

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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ABSTRACT

The national response to Hilda Neatby's So Little For the Mind provides an opportunity to analyze conservative educational thought in Canada in the period of the progressive education movement. Although the implementation of progressive education was often constrained and tentative at the classroom level, the changes in formal curricular objectives and arrangements provoked a range of conservative reactions based on a perception of radical change. Identifying the assumptions within these criticisms can contribute to understanding the evolution of conservative thought in Canada.

As the immediate catalyst for the national debate in 1953-54 Hilda Neatby's own ideas on education represented a conservative paradigm which could be set within a variety of contexts in order to identify the different elements of conservative thought in Canada that were represented in the debate. The trans-national nature of much of the content and pattern of conservative concerns raised in Canada was revealed in an analysis of "the great debate" in the United States. Reconstructing the context of Hilda Neatby's claim that her conservatism, as a basic intellectual stance, also represented an emphasis in cultural values that distinguished Canadian from American experience involved examining the extensive influence of the tradition of philosophic idealism in Canada. Such a basic stance towards the values of national life was further reinforced by the prevailing views of the loose, yet intimate and influential academic network to which Hilda Neatby herself belonged. In the context of public debate on progressive education as it appeared in the

newspapers of the time her conservative paradigm, while continuing to play the role of a lightning conductor, also acted like a prism, revealing a wide range and variety of levels of discrete conservative concerns.

The research findings suggest that the Neatby debate represents clear evidence of the conscious re-statement of a genuine tradition of conservative thought in education in Canada that was both national and trans-national. The philosophical grounds of the position may deserve closer attention both in the field of the history of education and in the range of debate on the ends of public education today.

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CHAPTER 1

In October, 1953, Dr. Hilda Neatby, child of English immigrant parents in pre-World War I Saskatchewan and professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan since 1934, published So Little For the Mind: An Indictment of Canadian Education. She had been a critical commentator on trends in public education in English Canada for at least a decade but in the years immediately preceding 1953 a series of circumstances gave rise to a more outspoken and larger statement on her part. Service on the Massey-Levesque Commission from 1949 to 1951 sensitized her to the relationship between culture and national identity. This perspective, coupled with the effect of the renewed emphasis on progressive education by the Hope Commission on Education in Ontario in 1950, provided Neatby the immediate provocation to write her treatise on Canadian education and culture. Discrete financial support from the Massey Foundation and personal support from Vincent Massey himself provided a tangible form of encouragement.

Hilda Neatby's polemical account of the effect of progressive education upon schooling in English Canada, produced such a market response that in the six months following the publication Clarke-Irwin, the book's publisher, surprised by public interest and demand, produced four extra printings, as well as a second edition. Across the country, editors, columnists, feature-writers and educators gave their views on and experience with the issues being raised. Part catalyst, part lightning conductor, Hilda Neatby's book became the focus of the first genuinely national and spontaneous "public hearings" about

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education objectives in the history of Canada. It is the content of the debate and the degree of public interest and commentary surrounding it which give rise to the questions at the heart of this dissertation: "Why was there so strong a response to Neatby's criticism of progressive education in Canada?" and "What does the controversy and interest signify?". This study will describe and analyze the concerns raised in the "Neatby Debate" and will consider why the ideas were so popular. The key characteristic of this response was that it arose out of a conservative critique. By identifying and describing the conservatism which Neatby enunciated and to which so many responded, one will gain a special insight into the nature of the conservative tradition in Canada at mid-century and thus contribute to the growing literature on the history of ideas in Canada.

At first glance, the roots of the controversy would seem to lie in the nature and degree of innovation in Canadian public education in the previous decade. The changes in education which were central to the public debate in the 1950s had gained prominence in the interwar period. However, a number of historians of Canadian education gauge the impact of progressive education upon schooling arrangements in Canada as in fact still quite limited in the years immediately following 1945. F. Henry Johnson, for example, has stated that Canadian teachers were generally conservative and when they did adopt something new it was usually modified to remove extreme aspects.1 R. S. Patterson, in his studies of English-Canadian classrooms between 1930 and 1945, has noted that although the official statements of departments of education suggest widespread use of progressive education ideas, surveys of teachers' practices indicate otherwise.2 The clear inference of such assessments is that allegations in 1953 of the subversion of Canadian schooling by progressivism were an exercise in tilting at a straw man.

Nonetheless, for the purpose of adding to our knowledge of the history of ideas it may matter less what actually was the case in classrooms of the nation than what caused Canadians to react so positively and strongly to one or the other side of the ensuing debate. This dissertation is not focussed on determining whether Neatby was justified or accurate in the classroom descriptions she advanced as she attacked progressive education and its negative effects upon Canadian education and culture. Attention, instead, will be directed at the assumptions contained in the arguments as vital ingredients in understanding the evolution of conservative Canadian thought and values. Central to the effort to uncover or to identify general societal values and perceptions through an analysis of public commentary on school curricula and organization is the assumption that the purposes and content of the curriculum reflect or embody answers to very fundamental questions about life and its conduct within society. The value of such analysis and description will be demonstrated through consideration of the public debate about the objectives and content of schooling which Neatby triggered in the decade of the 1950s.

Changes in social alignment and national characteristics, which had been emerging alongside older patterns since the 1930s were accelerated through the experience of World War II. The historical interest of the debate lies, in large measure, in the use of curriculum as a metaphor reflecting widespread public commentary on change in the traditional cultural identity of Canada in a postwar world dominated by the United States. Exploration of the controversy surrounding Neatby's book and progressive education thus leads naturally to a consideration of whether the Canadian experience was unique or, alternatively, an extension of a vigorous debate carried on since the late 1930s in the United States.

It is important that an examination of the Neatby debate remain sensitive to continuities and discontinuities between the American and Canadian experiences. Some clues exist that the wider conservative position that acted as the context for the arguments against education in the United States would find an independent source in Canada. For example, the biographer of Vincent Massey, Claude Bissell, puts forward his belief in a broad indigenous Canadian conservative tradition as the context of the views Hilda Neatby shared with Vincent Massey in the work of the Massey Commission on the relations between culture and society.3 In addition, the last ten years have seen an increasing amount of scholarly publications in the field of the history of ideas in Canada, particularly the work of Brian McKillop on the special place of philosophic idealism in Canada. He has documented the pattern of a major set of values and ideas identified with philosophic idealism which discriminate between the ethos of American and Canadian culture.4

Such opinions give encouragement to the hypothesis that the Neatby debate may represent in its conservatism something genuinely reflective of a particular Canadian tradition in political experience, cultural ideas, and public education. This would not in any way exclude the possibility that the assertion of the conservative perspective by Neatby was part of an attempt to renew and revitalize a discussion about basic views of man and society which transcended the national character of these events. Indeed it may emerge that it is essential to view this conservative perspective as both national and trans-national precisely because it represented a fundamental counterpoint in the on-going public debate about social purposes at that time. Furthermore, it may pose for today an underrepresented element both in the writing of the history of education and also more broadly in the dialectic of informed debate about the directions in which society is and should be tending, and the impact of public education on the outcome.

It is the purpose of this investigation to describe and analyze a number of contexts that will help determine the nature and substantiveness of that conservative perspective as it appeared in mid-century Canada in the Neatby debate on progressive education. Before examining Hilda Neatby's own ideas as they appeared in So Little For the Mind (1953) and A Temperate Dispute (1954), it is appropriate to review the Canadian approach to progressive education which these writings criticized. It will be especially intriguing to weigh the implications of the oft-repeated denials of radical change by these innovators. These will be explored by looking more closely at two representative provinces in the progressive education movement in Canada; Alberta as the province who went furthest in implementing progressive education and Ontario as the traditional model and mentor of public education in Canada.

The intended non-radical character of the implementation of progressive education in Canada, arising perhaps from a general preoccupation with progressive education as a set of techniques rather than a general philosophy, has tended to obscure and obstruct analysis of the conservative critique associated with Hilda Neatby. The task of carrying out that analysis must begin with a description of the content of Hilda Neatby's criticisms themselves and the particular philosophy of human nature upon which they were founded. The template of ideas which is thus developed may then be applied to a number of contexts in order to better determine its national identity and its national representativeness as an expression of conservative thought in Canada.

To determine the relationship of such ideas to those being raised by conservative critics of progressive education in the United States requires a review of the "great debate" in that country. Despite the extensive coverage given to the American phenomenon, its links to or parallels with other nations remain largely unexamined and the place of the debate in relation to American intellectual history may be as problematic as is the case in Canada with the Neatby debate. The primary value of the review will be to help test whether Hilda Neatby's commentary shows any differences in emphasis that might reflect Canada's national experience.

The specific forms in which her conservative views might represent the national experience will be explored through three additional contexts. The first will explore the association of ideas between Hilda Neatby's form of conservatism and the distinctive role of the doctrine of philosophic idealism in Canadian intellectual history. The impact of the basic assumptions of that intellectual tradition will depend to a large part on how far they might continue to be reflected in the formal writings and informal interaction of the intellectual circles to which Hilda Neatby herself belonged, and so this also will be explored.

Yet the Neatby debate was larger than Hilda Neatby herself. Her representation of the kinds of conservatism revealed in the public commentary in newspapers as readers and editors responded to her critique of progressive education remains to be described and weighed. It may demonstrate that if she acted as catalyst for Canadian conservative thought on this issue she did not contain it. There may emerge as many varieties of educational conservatism as historians of educational progressivism have shown existed in progressive education itself, and thus underline the value of using the Neatby debate as the basis for a fresh consideration of the evolution of the conservative tradition in educational thought in Canada.

NOTES

1 F. Henry Johnson, A Brief History of Canadian Education (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 136.

2 Robert S. Patterson, "The Implementation of Progressive Education in Canada, 1939-1945," in Essays on Canadian Education, Nick Kach, Kas Mazurek, Robert S. Patterson Ivan DeFaveri, eds. (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1986), pp. 79-96.

3 Claude Bissell, The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986), p. 234.

4 A. B. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978), p. 231

Chapter II

In 1954 C. C. Goldring, director of education for the Toronto Board of Education, declared, "there is not in Canada today a publicly supported system of education taught along progressive educational lines for the simple reason that parents and taxpayers would not approve of it".1 One year earlier Hilda Neatby's So Little For the Mind had become Canada's first best-seller about education on the basis of a conservative critique of the impact of progressive education on Canadian schools. The discrepancy between these perspectives dictates the point at which to begin an investigation into the nature and significance of that educational conservatism. It is necessary to begin with an analysis of the implementation of progressive education in Canada that will examine the two conflicting perspectives which on the one hand saw the changes as radical and fundamental and on the other believed that they were drastically muted by human and financial resources accompanied by a powerful social conservatism. This, in turn, will help to explain the aspects of the implementation of progressive education on which Hilda Neatby focussed in her critique. Essentially, an assessment of the nature of the conservative tradition she represented has to be preceded by an analysis of the nature of progressive education she criticized. Thus, one can take the first step towards disentangling from the broad area of what might be called simply "prudential" conservatism the distinctive elements of Hilda Neatby and the Canadian intellectual tradition on education that she articulated.

Robert S. Patterson has developed the most extended framework for analyzing the development of progressive education in Canada. He drew attention to the effect of a difference in timing between the introduction of ideas and practices associated with progressive education in Canada and the United States. Lawrence Cremin, author of the seminal study of progressivism in American education, The Transformation of the School (1961), had suggested that progressive education meant different things before and after World War I. In the earlier period progressive education was closely allied with political and social progressivism. After the war a variety of approaches appeared ranging from emphasis on the individual child to an investigation of the school's responsibility to society. Progressive education became identified with a series of maxims - learning by doing, activity-centered learning, educating the whole child, creating democratic citizens, focussing on the interests of the learner and employing a child-centered curriculum. Patterson felt that it was this second period of progressive thought that had the greatest influence on Canadian educational reforms of the 1930s.2

There had been some examples in Canada of earlier work in transforming attitudes towards children and education. Neil Sutherland's study of those groups and individuals at the turn of the century who promoted changes in public health and welfare regulations for children and families demonstrated the growth of such a new perspective.3 Within this context, however, the school tended to be viewed as only one of several delivery systems. Regarding the curriculum the approach was generally not to question fundamentally the core of traditional content and instruction, but to supplement it with new courses such as manual training. Broad political movements that carried explicit ideas on reconstituting the basic approach to schooling did not occur on a common national front at this time. The first clear steps in this direction became evident in the concerns of the farmer organizations that arose in western Canada after the Great War. There was alarm over the differences in educational advantages available to rural and urban children. Patterson has emphasized how some of the most active members of these organizations were among the first explicit supporters of such forms of progressive education pedagogy as the Winnetka and Dalton Plans. Their concern was expressed in the sentiment of the speaker to a convention of the United Farm Women of Alberta in 1928: "We believe our schools are too rigid, with too much routine...Our schools should emphasize training, not for examinations, but training for life".4

Partly because of the apparent challenge to almost all existing arrangements represented by the Great Depression the 1930s was the decade in which principles of progressive education became incorporated in provincial curricula at an accelerated pace, beginning in Saskatchewan.5 The revision of the Saskatchewan curriculum took place between 1929 and 1931. Patterson viewed these changes as falling short of complete transformation yet marking an important change of purpose in schooling.

> Whereas, prior to this time, the emphasis was clearly on subject matter mastery, accumulation of information and skill development, these were now regarded as means to an

> end. Health, social and spare-time activities became the focus of attention....
>
> Another theme apparent in the revision...was that related to self-activity of the child as a basis of learning. In language reminiscent of W. H. Kilpatrick, the authors of the new program agreed that "the spontaneous, vigorous, wholesome, purposeful self-activity of a child in his present stage of development will contribute more to the enrichment of his future life than any immediate concern of future needs".6

In January, 1931, in Nova Scotia a similar process of revision began which led to a curriculum in 1933 based on the principle that studies ought to be related to life situations. The next to follow was British Columbia in 1936, ten years after the publication in that province of the first major educational commission, the Putnam-Weir Commission, to directly promote the progressive program of education. In that year a new elementary curriculum was organized around the notion of how students learn rather than what they should learn. Patterson noted that the change made in Alberta's curriculum towards progressive education, taking place in that same year, went even further and that by 1940 further revisions put the Alberta curriculum at the leading edge of progressivism in Canada.7 In Ontario the curriculum for elementary schools which was introduced in 1937 represented a sharp departure from the past through emphasis on co-operative activities and child-centred learning. By 1940 Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Protestant Quebec had also revised their curricula in the same general direction. On the basis of these changes Patterson established a number of generalizations about the Canadian response to progressive education, the first being that no province remained unaffected by the movement.

> Revisions embodying the ideas and practices of progressive education were universally introduced. There were variations by province and to some extent by region, but these differences were minor. Through these changes the schools of the country were intended to become centers of active learning, relating in the process to the interests and natural characteristics of children...The whole child and his or her place in a democratic society were fundamental guiding principles in the changes.8

Patterson noted also that the opening statements in many of these curriculum revisions often gave an impression of the implementation of a whole new philosophy whose momentum was virtually unstoppable.

> From coast to coast, the leadership in each province heralded or introduced new programs with the acknowledgement of being part of a larger movement centered on the beliefs of progressive education.9

He cited a variety of contemporary statements by Canadian education officials that could hardly avoid leaving this impression in the minds of their audience. The tone was characterized, perhaps, by the remark of H. B. King, chief school inspector of British Columbia, that those opposed to the changes would find no place where they might escape the new education.10

Two provinces, Alberta and Ontario, are the particular objects here of analysis and description in relation to their involvements with progressive education; Alberta because of the pace-setting nature of its innovations after 1936, and Ontario, the largest and former mentor of all provincial systems of public education in Canada, that itself experienced a clear call to strike out in new directions in the elementary curriculum reforms of 1937. An identification of the relative balance of radical and conservative change in each provincial situation will provide a basis for examining different kinds of educational conservatism in terms of both ideas and groups, that would be most likely to react to the pattern of the implementation of progressive education.

In Alberta in 1940 a member of the School of Education at the University of Alberta was able to say that Alberta was "in the midst of a province-wide educational experiment to test a theory".11 This experiment was undertaken in response to the plight of the one-room school in the interwar years.

> The growing demand for secondary school instruction, the lower attendance in rural areas, the demands placed by multi-grade instruction on inexperienced, immature, poorly prepared practitioners and the unique needs of non-English speaking students in some communities combined to add credence to the claim that the most serious educational problem of the period was the rural school.12

In 1934 the Alberta Legislative Assembly created a committee to investigate rural education and learned that Herbert C. Newland, Supervisor of Schools, had appointed a three member committee to revise the curriculum on the basis of broader principles in harmony with the doctrine of progressive education.

Newland was recognized as a forceful, determined educational leader, one "who was eager to get at the fundamentals, to examine problems at their source. He was keenly interested in examining the basic values and goals of society and of education".13 In his own set of values the importance that he attached to a particular set of intellectual and economic definitions of democracy cannot be overemphasized. This genuine personal conviction had been intensified by the coincidence between his study of social reconstructionist thinkers such a George Counts and his reflections on the nature of the Great Depression.14 On this basis he championed pedagogical approaches to instruction and organization of subject matter that would promote the pathways of thinking that he saw as vital to a genuinely democratic society. One researcher believed this view of society was central to his view of schools.

> for him...society is not carried on by isolated individuals but by the cooperative interactions of both individuals and groups - the role of the school was to provide a realistic model for developing habits of co-operation, initiative, originality and responsibility - this was to require a curriculum that concentrated on present day social and economic culture - i.e. integration of subject matter...15

This was the core idea of the recommendations made to the legislative assembly in April, 1935, wherein children would "work together, as people do in life outside the school, on enterprises of common interest in which each participates according to his ability".16

Tracing the degree to which the implementation of the program based on these principles reflected the direction of political masters, the consent and support of teachers, and the extended, integrated and tough-minded world outlook of Newland himself is difficult. In an address to the Canadian Education Association two years after the committee tabled its original report Newland described Alberta's enterprise program as purposely circumscribed.

> To me it seems impossible to educate a child by permitting him to develop his interests apart from the common interest of the society in which he will live, and without regard to the social heritage which will condition his life.17

Nonetheless an examination of the speeches which Newland gave over the next few years indicates that his concept of enterprise education as part of a whole social philosophy had not diminished with time, as can be seen in the war-time speech "The Line of Action".

> Our democracy must be a total democracy: that is to say, it must involve the active participation of all the people, and it must operate throughout the whole range of social activity - cultural, religious, political and economic, in short it must be a political-economic democracy.18

This fidelity by Newland to the philosophy of social reconstruction appeared to put him out of step with his political masters over time.

Premier William Aberhart was generally supportive of the new program when it was introduced.19 The early war years did not apparently diminish this.20 One contemporary, W. D. McDougall, even likened the relationship between Aberhart and Harold Rugg to a "mutual admiration society" when the latter attended a teachers convention in Edmonton at Easter, 1941.21 Up until 1945 the close attention of Alberta Minsters of Education, first Aberhart and then Solon Low, had been on the political dimensions of the immense administrative restructuring of school districts. By 1945 Aberhart had passed away, Solon Low had entered federal politics, and the new Minister of Education, Earl Ansley, promoted a different emphasis, so that education "was no longer to be the hard, intellectual, rational process that H. C. Newland had conceived it to be".22 According to D. T. Oviatt, an official in the Department of Education at this time, the curriculum "was to be painted a soft tone of political pigment, and it was to be manned by multiple curriculum committees chosen for their spoken ideologies rather than for their demonstrated competencies".23 These cross-currents between the tough-minded analysis that had underlain the original curriculum design and the later shifts that represented promotion of "Christian principles" and "economic idealism" might reasonably be expected to have created an uncertainty, if not confusion, in the mind of the general public about the curriculum. That could be fertile ground for concerns ranging from basic competencies to the displacement of traditional academic divisions of subject matter.

Aggravating this was the manner in which Newland and the small circle around him had "managed" the introduction and the validation of the new program in Alberta. Patterson has suggested that in the urgency and certainty of his convictions Newland may have misrepresented the degree and quality of support among teachers.

> Newland was not above guaranteeing the outcome of the experiment in order to ensure the desired result. He selected as experimenters teachers of proven ability and those who had already shown an inclination toward the activity method.24

Patterson's own studies, based on a questionnaire responses by retired teachers, suggest that many classroom teachers felt too unprepared in training and under-equipped in facilities to implement the program as designed.25 This created frustration in the classroom that would promote and be emboldened by concerns about the program from the public outside. Within ten years of the introduction of the new program some of the earliest champions of the need for a review of traditional curriculum and methods were expressing concern about the product. The opening address to the 1946 annual convention of the United Farm Women of Alberta complained that, "We are turning out a generation of children who are weak mathematicians, poor spellers, and worse readers...it is high time that something was being done about it".26

More reaction to Newland's role in implementing the curriculum could occur than might alone have resulted from possible over-representation of the support among school teachers and inadequate attention to concerns by parents over basic competencies. The decision making power he and his reform associates took upon themselves displaced the influence of those academic groups who had traditionally acted as reference points for the model of education that had been translated from Ontario to the Territories before World War I. Thus, one must expect that there would come a time when representatives of such groups, carrying with them the special connotations of the relationship between public education and democracy, would push back against the new "experts" who had apparently de-legitimized the concept of education to which they were committed both intellectually and as part of the justification of their fragile place in the brittle vertical mosaic of western Canada.

Reviewing the implementation of progressive education in Alberta suggests that whatever may have been the disclaimers attached to their curricular changes by its promoters there was plenty of room left for a variety of conservative responses by different stakeholders in public education. Whereas the public concern that gave rise to the first legislative interest in new educational approaches was intensely practical and related to equalizing career opportunities for rural youth, H. C. Newland was preoccupied with schooling as an instrument for social reform. In addition the room for personal initiative by Newland and his circle that was partly the result of Newland's own strong-mindedness and partly occurred by default through the benign preoccupation of William Aberhart created conditions for reaction. His over-estimate of teacher acceptance, so essential to obtaining authority for extending the program, would in time potentially see a powerful common front of discontent emerge between home and classroom. Finally, the very exclusiveness of decision-making by Newland and his circle threatened the customary role and status of traditional elites within the intellectual life of the province.

Robert Stamp's recently commissioned study of the history of schooling in Ontario makes clear that in that province the chain of command remained much more established, even when it appeared that Ontario was setting itself on the same progressivist highway as Alberta. In September, 1937, a revised curriculum for elementary schools was introduced and it represented a clear choice for the educational values of progressive education over traditional views of content and process.

> The teacher was bluntly told that "the curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and fact to be stored"...Now, the Ontario school "must follow the method of nature, stimulating the child, through his own interests, into activities guiding him into experiences useful for the satisfaction and development of his needs".27

In its principles, then, this new Ontario curriculum was similar to revisions of courses of study in other provinces; indeed H. C. Newland claimed to find large direct borrowings from Alberta's program descriptions.28 Also similar were the cautionary statements by the main architects of this new curriculum. Thornton Mustard and Stanley Watson both wished for student activities in the classroom that still kept the teacher in control. It was also the case that initial teacher reaction followed the same pattern as in Alberta. There was balking as well as enthusiasm in that first year and the supportive statements by provincial leaders of the Home and School Federation and United Farmers of Ontario were not necessarily echoed by the ordinary members.29 Whereas, however, in the Alberta case the curriculum directions established in 1936 were not significantly modified until 1945, Robert Stamp has argued that in Ontario the coming of World War II decisively re-legitimized traditional behavioral, knowledge and value objectives at the expense of the new approach.

> Many Ontario educators hoped that the curricular revisions of 1937 might fulfil these new demands of a society at war...Was not the freer classroom atmosphere a daily

> example of democracy in action? Such hopes were naive, given the atmosphere induced by the global conflict? Already buffeted by teacher indifference and public skepticism, progressive education was delivered a severe blow with the outbreak of the Second World War.30

This sharp reining-in of progressivist curricula reflected an additional contrast in the role played by the political leadership of each province. According to Stamp, in the 1943 provincial election, Conservative leader George Drew clearly associated his party with drilling in the fundamentals, the values of loyalty to Canada and its ties to the British empire, and the kind of knowledge of British and Canadian history that would support these values.31 After winning a narrow victory in 1943 Drew kept the education portfolio for himself because it represented a platform for policies on social values that had tremendous political impact. Along with his senior advisor, J. G. Althouse, he developed a strategy for the 1945 election that emphasized traditional values in education that had been apparently de-emphasized in 1937.

> Drew used his educational philosophy and accomplishments to good effect in the campaign. A war-weary public felt comfortable with a party that stressed classroom discipline and factual learning, and had restored Empire Day, the cadet movement, and religious education to their "rightful" places within Ontario schools.32

There could be little doubt who was in control of the educational agenda.

The nature of that agenda, particularly the policies that were promoted by the permanent officials within the upper levels of the provincial educational hierarchy, may nonetheless be more complex than the implied character of a stand-pat conservatism imposed from above. Observers have detected a considerable element of social conservatism in the proposals developed by officials themselves. Yet this in turn may obscure other processes involved in these reforms that undermined conservatism in the form of the status quo in a number of ways. This can be illustrated by noting some of the unexpected cross currents of outlook and policy in two of Ontario's most prominent educational leaders in this period.

No educational administrator in Ontario was more dynamic in the decade or so before 1937 than J. H. Putnam, Inspector of Schools for Ottawa. Stamp contrasted Putnam's innovative style with the careful "timidity" of department of education officials.33 If Putnam did indeed represent the more extreme edge of the reform group within the Ontario educational establishment then the study by B. Anne Wood of a particular conservative cast that accompanied his thinking becomes especially significant. Her observations suggest a pattern of social conservatism that might satisfy and reassure those concerned with political order and social stability, while continuing to radically delegitimize the kind of knowledge and kinds of decision making that had justified other traditional elites, intellectual and cultural.

Wood argued that the career of J. H. Putnam is representative of the paths followed by many progressive educators between the wars, showing how an initial philosophic idealism became transmuted by the principles and interests of efficiency, professionalization and centralization so that it became a form of vocational conservatism.

> Instead of education being an individual's journey into higher forms of self-realization, leading to deeper understanding of Reality...it was to degenerate into an institutional social enterprise, schooling the majority of children for a conserving society.34

Wood put considerable emphasis upon the influence upon educators at the beginning of the century of a conjunction between the idealist principles that were promoted by Canada's most eminent Hegelian philosopher at that time, John Watson of Queen's, and the persuasive notions of mission that were part of the British imperial mission, as interpreted by George Grant of Queen's and Premier George Ross of Ontario.35 Her analysis of Putnam's activities as Inspector of Ottawa Public Schools suggest that his wish to promote the idealist notion of the fullest development of each for the good of all society led him early in his career to a major concern with the forty to sixty percent of pupils unable to pass the academic entrance exams for high schools and in so doing found himself opposed by a conservatism not only of ideas but of interests.

> A School for Higher English and Applied Arts...proved to be the battleground between the progressive forces of urban reform...and conservative forces, either of traditionalist or utilitarian colour. The conservatives early feared the professional aura of this new breed of school manager emerging from graduate school, represented by Putnam. They were afraid his efficiency principles of centralization and specialization would defeat their local power base.36

As such, Putnam came to resemble what David Tyack, in his study of the bureaucratization of American public education, called "the administrative progressives" who wished nothing less than a fundamental change in the structure and process of decision-making.37

With regard to another change in patterns of influence on public education no one has yet done comparative work from the Canadian experience of the kind of studies in the changing relationship over time between traditional academic communities and the emergence of integrated studies, particularly social studies, such as has been done by Hazel Hertzberg of Teacher's College, Columbia. In a study of the evolution of social studies reform in the United States between 1880 and 1980 she emphasized the long tradition of collegial interaction between the American Historical Association and classroom teachers of history that began with the American Historical Association report on secondary social studies in 1899.

> The report cemented a connection between the historical profession and the schools which continued for decades. Produced by the new professionals, it helped to ensure a leading place for history in the future social studies and to create a tradition which became seriously attenuated only after World War II.38

It might be surmised that if a parallel experience applied at all to Canada then such academic elites in this country might be among those to resent the displacement of their traditional consultative role and their kinds of knowledge and learning of how best to realize the ideal within the individual.

Arrangements for secondary teacher education associated with certain reforms by J. G. Althouse, Chief Director in the Ontario Department of Education from 1944 to 1956, suggest how just such an erosion of a traditional relationship might occur and bring in its wake deeper misunderstandings and accusations of a trust betrayed. Robert Stamp regarded the collaboration between Premier George Drew and Althouse on the 1944 Teaching Profession Act as "vital to winning teacher support for Conservative policies".39 Clearly it was also a key logistical step in developing the administrative and financial structure necessary to claims of professionalism. It remained uncertain, however, whether the policies of teacher training under which teachers, particularly secondary teachers, were to operate could allow it to become a profession based upon the broad foundation of academic training that marked existing professions. In 1949, as the first of the Quance lecturers at the University of Saskatchewan, Althouse revealed a strong personal inclination to redefine the function of a secondary school in view of the post-war trend, evident even so early after 1945, that secondary education had become "a stage in the schooling of every child, rather than a kind of education to be provided for some but not for all".40 He called for curricular materials that were not only concerned with preparation for adult life but the present world of the adolescent.

> The high school cannot be content with leading its pupils to the intellectual acceptance of high ideals, it must also equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to solve specific, practical problems of living.41

The emphasis was away from equipping teachers with traditional learnings. The failure to make the academic training the key element in teacher-training was highlighted by the emergency teacher-training methods authorized by the Department of Education to meet the teacher shortages of the early 1950s. Although the impact of department control of teacher education was greatest at the elementary level, as the numbers and staff sizes of secondary schools increased through the 1950s it ensured the separation between academic and professional training.

> Throughout this period, Ontario continued to possess one of the most dictatorial and thoroughly state-controlled systems of teacher training in the Western world. Certainly the change in name from normal school to teacher's college did nothing to free the training institutions from the tight bonds of departmental control. There was a rule or regulation for everything...Department control, often accompanied by a kind of stultifying conservatism of the mind, was equally strong in the field of secondary school teacher training at the Ontario College of Education.42

The likely distancing between the traditional academic world in Canada and teacher-training, especially for secondary school teachers, illustrated again the ironies that could accompany the social conservatism of some of Ontario's most energetic education officials. J. H. Putnam's educational innovations were aimed at creating a better adjustment between students, especially non-academic students, and society. In the process he introduced administrative structures that replaced traditional influence groups. A. J. Althouse's conservative commitment to control over teacher training at the same time that teachers were being guaranteed some of the key financial and administrative elements of professional infrastructure contributed to eroding a traditional relationship between secondary teachers and university teachers.

That relationship had been built upon a shared support for a high-school education that was a derivative of the classical ideal of a liberal education developed between the Renaissance and the nineteenth century. This was the context in which Robert Stamp placed many of the fears of university and high school people when the 1937 program was unveiled.

> More was at stake than the decline of Latin or the replacement of history with social studies. According to the older ideal, there were certain aspects of knowledge with which an educated person was presumed to be acquainted - certain ideas, certain languages. These critics chafed at the replacement of an aristocratic ideal of education with one that claimed to be democratic. They saw the real danger of the new education as a reduction of everyone and everything to the level of the least common denominator.43

When seen in this light the relationship takes on less of the character of self-interestedness and more of a shared commitment to a particular view of the intellectual and cultural heritage of English Canada and the kind of curriculum which would ensure the transmission of that kind of cultural literacy.

Two related cross-regional factors that might be expected to influence the perception of progressive education and thus the reaction to it were the American character of the post graduate training pursued by many of the leaders of progressive education in Canada and the heightened sense created by the work of the Massey Commission between 1949 and 1951 of the infrastructure needed to support a national set of cultural values. Teachers who went on to post-graduate training most often chose to study at well-established schools of education in the United States, particularly Teacher's

College, Columbia University. R. S. Patterson has reported that between 1919 and 1945 there was only one year in which Canadians failed to make up the majority of foreign students at Columbia.44 Such a pattern, he believed, led to a "significant" influence by American expertise in the actual planning and design of new curricula in Canada.45 This was certainly the case in Alberta where H. C. Newland worked so energetically to introduce progressive education. Newland had taken his doctorate at the University of Chicago where he studied under Charles Judd. George S. Counts was another of Judd's students and author of the manifesto of the social reconstructionist branch of the progressive education movement, "Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?" When he returned to Alberta from Chicago Newland actively promoted the study of Counts among his friends.46 In 1939, three years after the new curriculum was introduced in Alberta nine members of the Progressive Education Association travelled from the United States to the April teachers' convention to speak in support of the Alberta reform.47 Such a pattern of acknowledged orientation to American influences must have aggravated the alarm felt by groups who saw themselves as trying to sustain a different quality of experience in Canada.

Just such a view of the relationship between those who directed schooling and the traditional values of national life appeared in the Massey Commission's view of the condition of Canada's national culture. The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences had been established by Louis St. Laurent, somewhat reluctantly, in 1949. The Commissioners, among whom was Hilda Neatby herself, felt it necessary early in their investigations to make a distinction between the role of formal and general education in the development of culture. To the first of these was assigned the task of "development of the intelligence through the arts, letters and sciences".48 A concern raised by the Massey Commission in its final report in 1951 was whether the dependence on American post-graduate schools by Canadian teachers was having a harmful effect upon the traditional reinforcing relationship between Canadian schooling and the larger national culture.

> How many Canadians realize that over a large part of Canada the schools are accepting tacit direction from New York that they would not think of taking from Ottawa? On the quality of this direction it is not our place to pronounce, but we may make two general observations: first Americans themselves are becoming restive under the regime, second, our use of American institutions, or our lazy, even abject, imitation of them has caused an uncritical acceptance of ideas which are alien to our tradition.49

Yet this same view was directly challenged by many official spokespersons for Canadian provincial systems of education who saw themselves as adapting progressive education to Canadian conditions while their critics adopted the arguments of Americans. For example, in his 1952 Quance Lecture H. L. Campbell, Deputy-Superintendent of Education in British Columbia, described criticism of "modern functional education" as itself derived from the United States and based upon a mistaken notion about the role of progressive education in Canada.

> Most American educators of the progressive school regard Canadian education as most benighted, traditional and conservative...Canada has never followed the progressive

> movement in education, though the strengths of progressivism have made their contribution.50
>
> Whatever may be the reason, conservatism in matters of curriculum change has been a feature of Canadian education...essentialism in the fundamental skills has never been far from the thinking of Canadian educators - with a few notable exceptions, there have been few general revisions of curricula in any of the provinces which involved a complete rebuilding on a new or different philosophy.51

Two years later, in an address to an Alberta teachers convention, Dr. W. H. Swift, Deputy Minister of Education for that province, put forward the view that any similarity in educational solutions adopted in Canada and the United States was simply because "sociological and other factors come in time to resemble those existing in the United States".52

Such contrasting statements threaten to take the argument right back to its beginnings. Was there or was there not, then, a sufficiently radical break in Canada's philosophy of public schooling that would explain the nature of the pattern of subsequent criticism. Robert M. Stamp, in his commentary on the new program in elementary education in Ontario in 1937 believed that "in retrospect, the new program...did not differ much from previous curricula so far as the desired ends of education were concerned".53 George S. Tompkins, in a review of movements of educational change hypothesized that cycles of progressivism and traditionalism in the history of Canadian education did not represent real ideological opposites. He believed that sharp ideological splits were generally untypical of Canadian national life, especially in the post-World War II pattern of a liberal, interventionist society.

> A more useful way of looking at the development of education may be in terms of the model of the welfare state. Conservative and liberal values co-exist in such a state and, especially in a non-ideological society like Canada, form part of a broad social consensus...Like the welfare state, progressivism has become a conventional wisdom embodying both emphases, with an acceptance of the intellectual, moral, and social purposes of the school often obscured by debate over the means of achieving these purposes.54

Yet implicit within such a view is the displacement of what had previously been the "conventional wisdom" on education and thus the disguising of at least two "conventional wisdoms" in competition. The result would be the development, over the period of transition from one "conventional wisdom" to another, of two points of view that were not directly opposed to one another but instead reflected the diverging self-perspectives of each side in the debate over change. Those who were managing the change were so conscious of the quality of social conservatism they attempted to build ~~into~~ their programs that they found it hard to believe that criticism was not simply ill-informed, unfair and, by extension, unrepresentative of any significant element in national life and values. Those who were displaced by the change were so conscious of making the effort to conserve the integrated quality of philosophical principles and curricular arrangements in the former structure of schooling that they viewed themselves as the contemporary spokesperson for a view on the objectives and design of public education that had been central to the evolution of Canadian national life.

The co-existence of both these misaligned perspectives is well illustrated in some key statements in the report of the Hope

Commission on Education in Ontario in 1950 and in Hilda Neatby's response to them. As part of their planning for the postwar period, Premier Drew and J. G. Althouse had established the twenty-member Commission in March, 1945. The Commission made clear that it was very conscious of gathering its evidence and making its recommendations amidst a growing public consciousness of competing philosophies of education.

> We shall refer to only two main schools of thought, commonly designated as "the traditional" and "the progressive." To identify them, we may think of the traditionalist as one who believes in strict discipline and the mastering of school subject, and of the progressive as one who puts emphasis on interest and learning by experience.55

The briefs it received reflected this opposition of views. Stanley Watson, one of the original designers of the innovations of 1937, contributed to a department of education curriculum statement to the Commission, while the senate of Victoria University charged it with "sabotaging academic education, thereby jeopardizing much of the democratic ideal in Ontario".56

When it issued its report in December, 1950, the Commission appeared to walk a careful line between these two philosophies. On the one hand the Commission laid down "two virtues about which there can be no question - honesty and Christian love".57 Apart from these and other cardinal virtues, they also stated that a choice had to be made on where to strike the balance between the mores of the community and the moral development of the child, because "even where there is no clear issue of right and wrong, everyone is wrong, everyone is obliged to obey these rules or pay the penalty of social disapproval".58 Further, regarding the teaching of subjects, they wanted this carried out in "an accepted pattern" not only so that the child "learns at least something of the accomplishments of men in the past" but also because of the relationship of such studies to "character-building".

> We frankly declare at this point, our conviction that mastery of subject-matter is the best present measure of effort and the most promising of satisfaction in achievement. We are not unduly concerned that a proportion of school tasks should be hard and unpalatable, because much of life is equally so.59

On the other hand the Commission promoted the concept of "the whole child" that was central to the progressivist position and saw the aim of designing the program of studies to enable pupils to act for themselves as all important. They were also forthright about those authorities whom they regarded as having the greatest expertise in operationalizing such a concept.

> ...we have been ready, where necessary, to sacrifice some of the more obvious virtues of efficiency for the sake of those less obvious but still more valuable virtues which are necessary for freedom and good citizenship.
>
> In regard to the latter, we have found that the views of educationists and the needs of democratic living are, not unnaturally, largely identical...The needs of the child are the bed-rock on which we have tried to build up the whole system of education, and in regard to these needs, we have turned to the educationist and psychologist.60

Despite noting that the views of this group had changed in the past and might be expected to change in the future and thus should not be seen as "absolute truth", their statements were said to embody "almost universally accepted opinions" that it would be "folly" to disregard.61

Hilda Neatby was puzzled and provoked by these statements in conclusion of the Hope Report. Three years later in So Little For the Mind, in a chapter that surveyed expressions of opinion by Canadians viewing the public school system from the "outside", she challenged the seeming "helplessness" of the Commission before those whom they regarded as "experts".62 It would have been far more valuable, in her view, if the prominent laymen who had been asked to conduct the Commission had exercised their independent judgement of what were "the needs of the child".63 These specific critical comments were among the mildest in tone of any in her broad attack on what she saw as the harmful inroads of progressive education in Canadian schools. Yet the assumptions that lay within Hilda Neatby's questioning of the Commission's choice of views and authorities on public education in Canada did encapsulate the competing views over the nature of the reality around which student learning should be organized.

In the reaction by Hilda Neatby there seems to be captured a snapshot of a persistent conservative outlook on education. Such an outlook promises a fresh perspective on the statement by C. C. Goldring with which this chapter began. The denials of radicalism which are contained in his statement can be seen now as representing only a certain level of conservative motive that operated during the implementation of progressive education in Canada. The motive represented a genuinely prudential impulse but it offered only a limited form of conservatism. In addition, the studies of the implementation of progressive education in Alberta and Ontario have made clear that the variety of arrangements by which this impulse might be operationalized left a wide range of opportunities for further forms of conservative concern. It would be natural that such concerns would focus on particular arrangements, texts or methodologies for example. Beyond this, however, there was the issue of the replacement, knowingly or not, of one kind of view about the reality of the human condition by quite another. This was the level at which the Hope Commission had set the issue and made its choices and helps to explain the timing of the decision to draft So Little For the Mind. The next chapter will demonstrate how much Hilda Neatby enlarged the conservative response by raising a more fundamental concern over the assumptions about human nature and purpose which the philosophy of progressive education, and an American philosophy at that, threatened to remove from the public debate on the organization and ends of human society.

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[30] Ibid., pp. 173-174.

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[34] B. Anne Wood, Idealism Transformed (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), p. 195.

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Chapter III

When, in 1987, eight professors from the education faculties of both Saskatchewan universities published their concerns about the dilution of academic content in that province's curriculum, they titled the collection of essays, So Much for the Mind: A Case Study in Provincial Curriculum Development. The choice of title was an acknowledgement of the resonance created by Hilda Neatby's original work of criticism. When So Little For the Mind was published in October, 1953, it acted rather like a lightning rod, attracting to itself a range of conservative opinions about the nature and direction of public education in Canada. Other parts of this study will try to map these varieties and kinds of educational conservatism in Canada. The main concern of this chapter is to set out the nature of Hilda Neatby's own conservative philosophy of education.

So Little for the Mind was "An Indictment of Canadian Education". The dominant character and tone of the book was attack. Implicit in all of these criticisms, though, and sometimes explicitly expressed, are Neatby's own ideas on what schooling should consist of, especially at the secondary level. Underlying both the criticisms and the proposals are assumptions about how an individual should be trained in the best way to live and about the relationship between culture and society. These assumptions make up the general conservatism of Hilda Neatby's educational thought.

Her conservatism was essentially a desire to conserve a particular ideal; the "educated person". To build up the elements of

Hilda Neatby's version of that concept really requires an examination of both her criticisms of progressive education and her interspersed statements of what public schools ought to be doing. Throughout the unfolding of that information in this chapter it is important to remain oriented to the educational ideal set out in the preface to So Little For the Mind and the larger context of the relationship of democracy to education within which her "conserving" goal was set.

> ...I am disturbed at the apparent indifference of the experts to the disappearance of the old-fashioned concept of the "educated person" who chose to rest his reputation on his bearing and conversation, rather than on degrees and"research". Conversation is, no doubt, one of those rather exclusive recreations indulged in by the aristocracy and unfitted to a stream-lined and community-conscious democracy. Yet with all its undeniable merits the new democratic education seems to me to be weakened by inner strains and contradictions and even in danger of being altogether lost in the maze of aims and ideals which has been thrown up to disguise its own confusion.1

The general plan of So Little For the Mind reflected the main aim of targeting shortcomings in Canadian public education which threatened this concept of the "educated person." There was an introduction which gave Hilda Neatby's view on the level of intellectual liveliness and cultural grasp among most secondary students. The responsibility for this situation was laid at the door of the "experts"; senior education bureaucrats and administrators, along with the faculties of teacher training colleges. The shortcomings of these groups filled up the first main section of the text. Her analysis of course outlines in English, Social Studies, Science and the options in the next section completed the evidence she presented for her claim that genuine education was eroded and endangered by the ideas of progressive education. Hilda Neatby expanded the argument within So Little For the Mind by placing the dispute between herself and the "educationists" in two wider contexts than the Canada of her own time from which she had drawn all evidence up to that point. In the later sections of her study she ranged more widely in space by selectively reviewing the opinions of contemporary critics of progressive education in the United States and Great Britain. She also set the cultural values involved in the dispute within a survey of major intellectual trends in the western world since the Enlightenment. So little For the Mind was the major reference point for Canadian disputants in the months following October, 1953. In 1954, out of this period of active public controversy she published a collection of lectures she had given to various groups interested in education. This set of essays, A Temperate Dispute, also deserves examination as a reflective piece in which Hilda Neatby tried to restate the most essential elements of her position. Taken all together these separate parts of So Little For the Mind and A Temperate Dispute compose the principal expression of Hilda Neatby's conservative views of education.

For her the essential problem was that students appeared to be so very far from the ideal "educated person". She laid the basis for her criticism of progressive education by listing the shortcomings of contemporary students. Most, she believed, were anti-intellectual and anti-cultural in their outlook. Intellectual grasp would include "a body of facts which must be learned precisely, and which provided, as it were, the material of thought".[2] By cultural knowledge she meant a knowledge of and appreciation for works that would be traditionally regarded as the highest expression of the intellectual, artistic and moral values of western civilization.[3] These intellectual and cultural shortcomings had led to an erosion of moral knowledge in students.

There were several levels to Hilda Neatby's concept of moral understanding. It meant acceptance that "life may be difficult and disagreeable as well as delightful and simple"[4], thus requiring elements of competition, risk of failure and hard work to be built into the school regimen. At another level it corresponded to a view that the guarantee of continuous virtuous behavior by individuals lay in them having an intellectual grasp of what is virtue and why it is desirable, such grasp arising from an understanding of the broad cultural inheritance of society.

> Are the schools giving pupils such knowledge of their civilization, its history, its philosophy, its achievements and its failures,that they are ready to refuse the evil and to choose the good; that they may play an adequate part in its growth and in its enrichment...The plain truth is that they are not doing these things. They are carefully avoiding the essential issues.[5]

Altogether the meaning given to moral knowledge in So Little For the Mind reflected Hilda Neatby's belief that life was meant to be lived with seriousness and strenuousness as well as intelligence.

The responsibility for creating so defective a system of public education lay, she believed with the direction of the permanent bureaucracies that composed each provincial ministry. The ethos of this group emphasized technical expertise as the expected background for such decision-making authority rather than high levels of general learning and culture.6 This tendency was strengthened by the way in which such decision makers had interpreted the ideas of John Dewey.

In a memorable phrase Hilda Neatby described Dewey's role in twentieth century education as "what Aristotle was to the later middle ages, not a philosopher, but the philosopher".7 She claimed that a low level of general education, especially in philosophy, among educational decision makers had caused Dewey's views to have a doubly harmful effect. Not only had they absorbed his anti-culturalism, in terms of discounting the value of mastering the literary heritage of the past, but their personal lack of training in dealing with major cultural texts caused them to miss the particular kinds of intellectual rigour in student and teacher he did promote as part of forming a "socialized disposition".8 Most of all it seemed they had not honestly grappled with Dewey's thorough-going opposition to formal morality and transcendentalist ideas, along with the heavy freight of selective attitudes and behaviors that he made to constitute the sole defining mentality of democracy.9 The result of such combined partial understanding was a very opaque quality in the statements of progressive education philosophy in Canada.

Hilda Neatby regarded the introductions and preambles to provincial curricula as the most authoritative, because most official statements of the philosophy of progressive education as implemented in Canada. She poked fun at the number of "living skills" beyond that of academic knowledge for which curricula, particularly in the prairie provinces, took responsibility.10 She criticized the "satellite" mentality which lay behind the open and unexamined indebtedness to the social analysis and educational proposals of American progressive education found in these statements; unexamined both in terms of appropriateness to Canadian society and capacity of Canadian educators to develop an adequate analysis on their own.11

Hilda Neatby singled out a set of key ideas she believed to be largely present in provincial curricular statements. Her concern was over seemingly important changes in meaning that were being given to traditional national values. The first was that democracy was given a kind of profile and definition that reflected the historical tradition of the United States and not Canada.

> Canadians do not date their national existence from a great eighteenth century revolution.Canadians have never produced a John Dewey.Canadians do inherit and hope to perpetuate the social "values", or could we be old-fashioned and say "virtues", developed during the whole period of western civilization, but they clearly perceive that many of these virtues were practised before the appearance of modern democracy in the eighteenth century.12

She rejected the sweeping quality of statements that held up traditional practices and curricula as autocratic and harmful to the child and in turn she challenged the assumptions of progressive education. The presentation of the tasks of mastery of subject matter and the adoption of desirable attitudes as mutually exclusive appeared to her to be a wholly false dualism. The knowledge she saw being demoted concerned the major works, figures and ideas of

Western culture. The motive was a view of the relationship between democracy and education that wanted all to succeed in school and assumed that education viewed as cultural transmission was too difficult for the many and therefore should be denied also to the few in the name of equality. Hilda Neatby believed that the proper relationship between the many and the few in a democracy should be the reverse of this.

> the "democratic society" in the name of which education is being steadily watered down lives only on the creative efforts of the gifted few in all forms of endeavor, and on the ability of the majority in varying degrees to inspire, support,and use them.13

Most essentially she believed that the highest levels of virtue and moral reasoning were obtainable only by mastering the intellectual roots of these values and not by separating the two.

The need to base moral understanding upon a conscious and consistent system of ideas provided the stated reason for her impatience with the unsystematic quality of the broad policy statements about the importance of imparting healthy attitudes to students. While agreeing with the worth of many of the separate moral objectives set out in these documents she objected that, in their loose combining of attitudes of social cooperativeness, individual expressiveness and respect for general transcendentalist values, such lists contained many unexamined intellectual inconsistencies. She viewed the emphasis on social adjustment and individual satisfaction as running counter to a genuine understanding of the Christian mystery of a conjunction of grace and morality, of renunciation and fulfillment. It was not so much the failure to make the reconciliation that provoked her as the apparent failure to see that any such squaring of ideas was needed.

> Although the democratic philosophy in the view of many is rooted in Christian belief, its most ardent exponents, including John Dewey, have often been vehemently opposed to Christian dogma. It is, therefore, the more important for educational experts to make clear that the Christian concepts taught in the schools are clearly and obviously reconcilable with the current conception of democracy.
>
> This is not done. It is all too obvious that it has never occurred to a single expert that perhaps it ought to be done.14

The pattern of research projects carried out by most educators, so heavily weighted to the study of the logistics of delivering public school programs and relatively neglectful of questions about the objectives of education, was to her a further demonstration of this shortcoming.15 She believed that the recognition of the need to think things through had become displaced in the curriculum designers' own habits of mind and therefore also in the objectives they set for the classroom and the students. Any attempt to impart attitudes through means other than reasoning them out privately she regarded as dishonest.16

Those who designed the teacher-training programs in normal schools and colleges of education were the next target in Hilda Neatby's critique of progressive education. The general thesis which ran through this criterion was that the level of expectation of general learning and culture in staff and training programs was too low. To her this neglect was the most important cause for questioning the legitimacy of both.

> It is the...tendency to ignore, if not to deny, this foundation that elicits much of the criticism which is being levelled, in increasing quantity and vigor, at institutions for the training of teachers. Moreover, many who regard the work of the training schools as important and even essential are alarmed at the immense power and responsibility rested in them and their directors, whose professional reputations make them immune to lay criticism.17

What she claimed to criticize in normal schools was a version of education that was shallow and partial in both philosophical and historical contexts and that concentrated on methodology rather than the content of traditional subject areas.18 Similar shortcomings existed for Hilda Neatby in the programs of Canadian colleges of education attached to universities. She criticized claims that knowledge of a body of techniques by themselves made a legitimate basis for claims of professionalism.19 The fault, she believed, lay in the quality of the teaching staff of the teacher-training institutions. Did they deserve the status of post-secondary instructors when their training lay in the very kinds of courses whose intellectual worth had just been questioned?

> They are likely to be deficient in general scholarship and even in general culture, as the"layman" defines these things. Not many of them have achieved a really scholarly acquaintance with any special field of learning, except perhaps psychology; few are men of cultivated tastes or of wide general reading. Few have had the benefit of that close contact with cultivated and superior minds which is the essential part of liberal education.20

Hilda Neatby included this group with those education administrators and bureaucrats earlier condemned for wielding decisive power over the character of Canadian schooling while lacking in the knowledge and the sense of scholarship.21

The quality of expression in formal educational statements was judged by Hilda Neatby to represent false intellectual standards that threatened to undermine the cultural literacy that was essential to civilized discourse. She regarded opaqueness of language as the unhealthy result of efforts by the academically unqualified to take a controlling position in public education.

> The professional educator...has set himself apart from the whole western rational and scientific tradition either because he is genuinely convinced by Dewey that truth is pragmatic and not subject to the operation of abstract reason; or because Dewey is a convenient pretext for setting up a new profession, a new hierarchy, of which he, the educator, is in control and in which the traditional scholarly values of the "layman", the power to observe and reason, are deliberately disqualified. If the educator once admits these values, his own monopoly of power is at an end.22

She asserted that the language and instruction she described were the signs of a dogmatism that was in turn an overcompensation for a sense of intellectual and academic insecurity.

The same allegation formed the basis of Hilda Neatby's criticism of the actual courses of study in different provinces. She believed that the prescribed content and methods of school courses undermined the values of an older educational tradition based on a different notion of democracy.

> The vices [of the new system]...are new in this sense that they are typical twentieth century vices representing equalitarianism and totalitarianism masquerading under the cloak of democracy...the new philosophies and the new procedures constitute a genuine danger for the liberal education which must be the foundation of a free society.23

The courses of study in Ontario were used by Hilda Neatby to represent general tendencies.24 She criticized the importance placed on the self-motivation of the student and the apparent neglect of traditional children's classics in favour of contemporary literature out of a belief that the former material was too difficult. This led her to suggest that avoiding classic material as too demanding could in fact have the effect of creating a "very specialized class education system" rather than making available the highest quality of education to the best minds from any social group.25 Hilda Neatby also sought support for retaining non-contemporary material by another argument from democracy. It reflected her belief that the rewards of democracy in the sense of sharing in rulership should go to those who have attained it through high thinking and that values and attitudes are usually, possibly only, firmly held when based upon an intellectual grasp of their validity.

> Progressivists wish to engender democratic attitudes and appreciations of democratic society.They cannot do this effectively by a persistent preoccupation with immediate experience. The pupils must be moved into other times and other societies. They must see human nature in circumstances entirely different from their own if they are to derive any appreciation of permanent values.26

Hilda Neatby believed that many of the criticisms made about the course of studies and methods of teaching English literature and language applied also to Social Studies and the natural sciences.

She believed there was too much emphasis upon the present, that the selection and arrangement of material was manipulative while also being too preoccupied with student interest. The manner of her criticisms revealed some interesting assumptions on her part about the treatment of historical knowledge in the classroom.

> ...it is disturbing to feel that teachers are required to subordinate their teaching even to the best propaganda. One cannot help inquiring whether this is not just as tendentious and much less moral than the old-fashioned moralizing of the traditionalists. Might it not be better to return to the franker traditionalist approach:"These are the facts; this is what you should learn from them".27

There was a clear assumption that certain traditional divisions of material represented a neutral body of knowledge. The general location of the material itself within the Western, European and British context was not seen as problematic, as constituting by that very circumstance a particular interpretation of human experience.

Further light was thrown on the limits of Hilda Neatby's concept of the intellectual content of education by her views on the optional courses. These were specifically developed to enable students to pursue special interests in a supportive setting. Once again Hilda Neatby regarded the emphasis upon interest and success with suspicion.28 Even the aesthetic context of these studies fell short of her concepts of proper intellectual pursuits associated with her concept of the educated person. She rated music and art as studies earlier viewed as "elegant recreations" whose increasing recognition in education was "an important and excellent progressive contribution "but which now seemed ready to take too much importance in secondary school education compared to subjects with more traditional intellectual content and structure.29

Hilda Neatby believed that all changes in schooling which displaced intellectual rigour contributed to an erosion of the idea that there was some external standard against which one could and should be measured. This clearly had an implication for the forms of student evaluation to be used and it is worth noting that she regarded the traditional form of academic test as a British idea, in contrast to what she saw as an American emphasis on high school as a setting for social maturation.30 Her view of the virtues of traditional examinations reflected the belief that the strain of meeting external challenges was inseparable from life. She contrasted this with what she saw as the self-centeredness that arose from the child-centeredness of progressive education. She believed that education should be external to self in the focus of its learning as well as its evaluation. To do the opposite involved important spiritual risks.

> Who is so bored and so boring as a self-centered person? Who is so happy and so free as the one whose pleasures and interests reach outward?...It is as good a definition of education as any: the discovery that the world is more interesting than oneself...The danger of the "child-centered school"is that it does not express the belief that the world, or rather ideas, which are generalizations about the world, are really very interesting.31

Hilda Neatby insisted that her criticisms of the condition of public schooling in Canada were based on and referred to Canadian evidence. She claimed equally, however, that her criticisms were similar to those expressed elsewhere in the English-speaking world; concerns over "modern tendencies to materialism and secularism along with a renunciation of absolute standards".32 She believed that there were two alternative and at first competing sources of concerns; on the one hand a belief that religion was being undermined and on the other that rational humanism was not being sufficiently promoted. This apparent opposition of concerns was reflected in her identification of British and American critics as either transcendentalist or humanist and her review of these writers was according to these ideological stances and not national origin. Inferences from her commentary on these views provide helpful information on her own ideas of how public schools should go about providing young people with the kind of knowledge from which they could draw ideals for living.

The publicists reviewed by Hilda Neatby were not commentators on schooling in a narrow sense but rather wrote about education against the wider canvas of the relationship between culture and society. They felt moved to speak out because of misgivings about the character of the age in which they lived. Such a one was the Anglo-American critic T. S. Eliot, and it is apparent that Hilda Neatby found his ideas, while ultimately too extreme for her to accept, contained a description of the issues at the root of the educational debate that made clear the importance of the choice involved. In essays such as "Modern Education and the Classics" Eliot had published a series of august and angry commentaries on the relationship of culture and society from the viewpoint that all education was ultimately religious. He asserted that genuine spiritual education depended upon the encouragement and training of a contemplative (versus an active) outlook, which in turn absolutely required a pure Christian, defined as Catholic, education. Hilda Neatby's attention was caught by some of the insights struck off by his view of a struggle between Catholic Christianity on the one hand and liberalism and materialism on the other. For example, she found his term "contemplative outlook" a useful metaphor to use in an essay she published in the year following So Little For the Mind.33 Both there and in the earlier writing she drew back, however, from the utter surrender to the transcendental that T. S. Eliot's position involved.

Hilda Neatby presented the writings of Sir Walter Moberly, former professor of philosophy at Birmingham University and Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University, as less uncompromising. He found it necessary, regretfully, to reject Eliot's proposal because it put so much weight upon a surrender to faith. Hilda Neatby emphasized Moberley's view that Christianity had "nothing to do with the authoritarian nor the anti-intellectual".34 Her idea of what must be religion's essential contribution emerged further in her comments on the writings of Dr. Bernard Iddings Bell, an American clergyman and educator whose book, Crisis in Education, published four years earlier, had played an important part in generating the public criticism of progressive education in that country. She regarded Bell as a transcendentalist who placed importance on the religious element in education, not because of the doctrinal specifics of any denomination but because of the orientation it provided on the relative seriousness of the different activities that make up the way that humans should live.

> ...it is evident from their (Moberly and Bell) writings that they are interested in restoring to the schools not so much a religion but religion, a term which in this context, can perhaps be defined so simply as an idea ...of "the final seriousness of life," an awareness that there are more important things than the merely material.35

In this emphasis upon the importance of gaining a sense of mental and spiritual qualities needed in order to understand the best way to live one's life as a human being Hilda Neatby believed she had found the common ground between transcendentalists and the humanist critics. Here she hoped would be a bridge between those who regarded the texts of revealed Christianity as the most important resource for education for living and those who claimed that the great works and ideas of the broad cultural tradition of society constituted a coherent set of principles by which to live. The intellectual qualities of the second of these means of spiritual training seemed to attract her. She cited Sir Richard Livingstone, former Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, as someone who, believing that the time had passed to make religion the basis of curriculum, found a suitable alternative source of vital spiritual standards in the qualities of mind and spirit present in great historical works and actions.36 She found further support for this in the statements of Mortimer Smith, another of the harbingers of the wave of public criticism of progressive education in the United States in the early 1950s. He defined the tradition being threatened by progressive education as a type of cultural knowledge that generated principles for living.

> (It was) based on the conviction that education consists of the attempt to transmit the whole heritage of man's progress through history and to evolve from that study spiritual and moral standards by which the individual learner can live in the contemporary world.37

The best known publicist of the value of this traditional form of liberal education was Robert Maynard Hutchins of the University of Chicago. It was quite natural then for Hilda Neatby to conclude her review of non-Canadian critics of progressive education with some selections from him.

The particular source that Hilda Neatby used was a set of lectures given by Hutchins at the University of Toronto in 1952. The two points from his address that she chose to emphasize demonstrated a distinct perspective on the worth of different cultural models of man's nature and of different notions on the genuine meaning of democracy. He argued that only liberal education matched western culture's emphasis upon the rationality of man whose highest form of living came from participating in "the dialogue that was the heart of western civilization".38 The ethnocentrism of this view was conscious and deliberate.

Less immediately evident but equally important was the ambivalent concept of the relationship between democracy and education that was embedded in the next argument; inasmuch as liberal education had in the past been the education of rulers and since democracy makes every man a ruler then every citizen should have a. liberal education. This syllogism lent itself to two quite different views of the relationship of a liberal education to the division of power in society. The first is that since universal suffrage distributes rulership among the people equally then all should be supplied with the kind of education that rulers used to receive. The other is that since one of the marks of rulership was the possession of a liberal education then one of the ways of recognizing the natural leadership of individuals or groups within a democratic society was that such persons clearly demonstrated the intellectual and cultural breeding that came from mastery of such an education. In the one case the content and skills of academic liberal education represented an obligation to the mass; the second case represented a means of conserving the traditional qualifications for authority and status from the mass society. Both propositions were part of Hilda Neatby's thinking; one is marked by a generous spirit while the other represents restrictiveness. Both are implicit in the statements on Hutchins and both were reflected in comments made in other contexts in the balance of So Little For the Mind.

One of these contexts was her review of Canadian commentaries on education that might stand alongside the writings of Hutchins, Livingstone and Bell for substance and extensiveness. She claimed to find few.39 The published series of Quance Lectures in Canadian Education given at the University of Saskatchewan since 1949 did represent something authoritative and Hilda Neatby's comments on the inaugural lecture given by J. G. Althouse, Chief

Director of Education for Ontario, echoed the first interpretation of the relationship between liberal education and democracy suggested above. She disputed his characterization of the traditional form of schooling, based on some version of a liberal education, as resulting in the education of a few for a limited number of career activities.

> Good traditionalists, although, rightly or wrongly they have seen education rather as a special preparation for the future than as appropriate living in the present, have been as emphatic as any progressivist in their refusal to take a narrow view of their calling.40

The second view was reflected in her concluding comments in So Little For the Mind. There, dealing with the question of whether students who would not or could not respond to the academic standards of liberal education should leave school, she was firm on one point. To alter the curriculum so as to focus on the wants or wishes of such students would mean that "the keepers of the gate are opening the citadel to the barbarians".41 The metaphor was quite explicit.

The urgent tone of that metaphor was reflected throughout the last chapter of So Little For the Mind. There Hilda Neatby put the dangers she saw in the prevailing notions in the public education of her day into a broader context of intellectual trends in the Western world since the Enlightenment.

> Educators and their systems are but a symptom. As they, along with the late Dr. Dewey, are so fond of saying, "Education is life," and the ills of education are precisely the ills of modern society...Since the eighteenth century the west has been busy trying to replace faith by reason, aristocratic distinctions by democratic

> equality,humanity in its broadest sense by a concern for material well-being. In all these matters the pace has been pressed too hard...42.

Yet parallel to the ambivalence over the relationship of liberal education to democracy that was discussed above there persisted for Hilda Neatby a dilemma over the balance to be made between the mentalities of revelation and reason as intellectual equipment for the best way to live in modern times.43 For her the autonomy of individual reason and intellect must yet be circumscribed by something overarching; a cosmology inspired by religion, exhibited in moral attitudes of effort and patience, and perennially expressed in the greatest works of western culture.

Mid-twentieth century society appeared to her to be suffering from the near complete loss of Christian faith without having secured an adequate stoic philosophy to substitute for it. Nonetheless it appears clearly implied in statements she made about the spiritual dangers of emphasizing easy success for students that Hilda Neatby's stoicism remained underwritten by a considerable trust that certain ideas and ideals had a secure place in a universal order.

> The secure person is prepared for long-range investments of time and energy, and he is prepared to pay costs in the shape of weariness, pain, and frequently in a sense of failure. He does this because he knows where he is going and why. He is not frustrated by failure, or afflicted by his inferiority because his philosophy tells him that there is a scheme of things and that he has a place in it.44

The ideas could be identified by rediscovering the original nature of the main sources of western thought - Judaism and Christianity, Greek and Roman thought, and modern humanism. Although western society was a product of all these things, increasingly it was an "unconscious product".45 This made it urgent to recognize that the responsibility and opportunity to carry out such studies should be the foundation of teacher education.46 On the basis of such instruction the character of the students would be elevated by studies of individual greatness of thought and action in the past, although the moral standards of society were not to be open to discussion "until the children had mastered enough facts to be able to discuss them intelligently", since such facts represented "all the wisdom of the ages".47 Her final argument, therefore, was a repetition of her main thesis: the surest way to virtue was through the intellect.

One year after So Little for the Mind Hilda Neatby published A Temperate Dispute, a much slimmer volume made up of four essays, originally addresses made to groups during the debate that had occurred in the intervening months. This second major statement is very useful precisely because it was made at the end of the period of most active public discussion in which Hilda Neatby had been called on repeatedly to explain and defend her ideas. It provides a check on which of the ideas presented in the original work she felt to be so central to her position as to deserve fresh exposition and emphasis one year later.

The title for the published collection came from the first address included in the set and carried suggestions of self imposed restraint in the interests of accommodation. Nonetheless it concentrated on one of the most abrasive corollaries of Hilda Neatby's concept of the qualities required in the "educated man" and therefore even more in those who must train teachers with this end in view. The thrust of her argument was to criticize the authority over the general aims and purposes of public schooling by officials whose personal education emphasized technique in contrast to learning that was broadly intellectual and cultural in character. On this basis Hilda Neatby called for limitations on the authority of those now in decision-making positions.

> Surely the values, the aims, and the standards of education should be determined not by technical experts, but by representatives of the much wider body of educated people who presumably are better equipped to say what education can and should do for the individual.48

The identity of those implied in the term "much wider body of educated people" remained problematic. Insofar as she had already put a restricted meaning on the genuine use of the term "educated" that consciously set it aside from mastery of technical knowledge then the character of the social group qualifying as educated might be expected to also be more restricted than the phrase suggested.

Hilda Neatby's concept of the "body of educated people" seemed most identifiable with some past or at least passing set of assumptions about the characteristics of those who would lead society. This emerged in elaboration of her view that those who did presently have decision-making power in Canadian public education had designed a form of schooling which threatened "to cut us off from the living roots of our civilization".49 The danger was that the kind of knowledge traditionally possessed by those society must expect to be among its leaders would be lost.

> It is, I believe, increasingly obvious that these intellectual purposes are not central in Canadian elementary and secondary schools. We are doing or trying to do all kinds of other things...We are,however, leaving even our most intelligent pupils in a condition of vagueness and confusion about the classical areas of study: literature, science,philosophy, history, art.[50]

For Hilda Neatby effective thinking could only be achieved as a result of mastering the form of investigative thinking used in one of the traditional major disciplines. It was exactly the view that most of the increased numbers of students whom public schools must now handle could not or would not participate in such learning that she rejected. She saw such learning as essential to the identity of those who were genuinely educated. In order to conserve the quality of such a group then exclusion must be used.[51] The tone of the arrangements she proposed here for the mental stimulation of the teacher in both training period and classroom performance was marked by a reverence for the elevated character of the service. The moral ingredient of the student activity also emphasized the kind of self-control and self-denial traditionally associated with preparation for a special service; happiness was a result of effort, even painful effort, character was best formed through the serious tone of study and exposure to past examples of great deeds and thoughts, and self-realization required a growing awareness of something outside self that was greater than self, along with the opportunity to withdraw from society for private reflection. Throughout her statements it is clear that her main concern was to preserve something precious from the pressures of mass society.

> If we are to content ourselves with mere happiness, interest, group integration,self-realization, we are not bringing up free men and women. We are conditioning units for mass servitude. In a chaotic world we are entrusted with a few priceless things that still remain: the fervour of religious faith, the absolutism of moral principle, the freedom of the mind.Democracy is the fruit of these roots.52

There was a natural reinforcement of this theme in the second essay included in A Temperate Dispute.

"The Group & the Herd", as its title suggests, was the vehicle for Hilda Neatby's contention that the coming of the mass in both the arrangements for economic production and the visible pattern of urban life was eroding the ethic of nineteenth century individualism and replacing it with a group mentality. She avoided any fundamental opposition between individualism and democracy by imputing a distinction between John Dewey's concept of democracy and that of his followers. She regarded Dewey as one who celebrated the trends in industrial technology and urban society as the means of supplying the ethos by which democratic government would replace aristocracy's hierarchical arrangement of society, not by substituting for but by fulfilling individualism.

> Whatever one may think of the ultimate implications of Dewey's conception of man, no one can doubt his immediate respect and concern for human personality. A product of the nineteenth century, he assumed Christian values while repudiating Christian dogma. His ideal group seems to have been a true group, composed of persons whose right to freedom and whose powers of self-realization he was committed to defend and foster.53

The value of this assessment of Dewey lies in the clue it provides to the importance of the quality of privateness in Hilda Neatby's concept of individuality. She believed that the strength to be solitary arose from being able to derive meaning and purpose from a universal set of values beyond the immediate, that such values give meaning and direction to all activities because they provided a measure of perfection.

The quality of Hilda Neatby's concept of culture as a pursuit of ideals of perfection outside oneself was underlined by the enthusiasm she showed for Matthew Arnold's views on the relationship between society and culture, in which the pursuit of culture became a means of approaching the will of God and consequently the highest form of individual activity.

> Arnold's blunt suggestion that the will of God be regarded as a social aim is enough to send more than a flutter through post-Dewey dovecotes. It brings up a terror of the absolute, a repulsion of the transcendental, a rejection of the supposed arbitrary, external discipline which interferes with human growth and human freedom... In an age of relativity and "group thinking" there can be no absolute external growth.54

The language employed by Hilda Neatby to describe the persons who were devoted to the pursuit of these universals was marked by implications of being set apart from the crowd. Although she found something sympathetic in Dewey's notion of how the individual could find fulfillment in cooperative activity her own descriptions of the genuine individual talked more often of "the person fitted by nature and education for solitude and for leisure".55

It is in the description of the relationship of the individual to the group, the tension between the autonomy of individual reason and the critical importance of the survival of the traditional values of the group that Hilda Neatby's language takes on its most urgent tone.

> ...all we have learned, all we have achieved,derives from the individual who is in the group but who remains an individual; who co-operates and even submits, but who can, if he must, stand off from his fellows and tell them they are wrong.56

The issue is the perennial tension at the heart of Protestantism, to hold equally to the individual's right to approach God separately by power of spirit and mind and to society's need to preserve the authority and traditions of the group which tempers that right.

For Hilda Neatby true virtue, genuine spiritual understanding, arose from a foundation of learning, learning of a particular character. The nature of the learning she valued was re-emphasized in the third essay, "Is Teaching a Learned Profession?". In the argument presented what distinguished a profession was that its specialized knowledge was based on and interacted with extensive general learning on the model of traditional liberal education.

In the final essay, "The Debt of Our Reason", Hilda Neatby returned to the main principle from which all her other views of education developed as a corollary. The title was derived from a statement by the seventeenth century physician and metaphysician, Sir Thomas Browne. He wrote Religio Medici as a response to accusations that his pursuit of science put in question his religious faith. The issue was the relationship between the autonomous intellect and preservation of the set of values and world views that constituted the tradition upon which society was based. In his original work Browne had defended himself by describing reason as the "debt" owed to God and "the homage we pay for not being Beasts".57 Such a characterization of the role of the intellect struck a very responsive chord in Hilda Neatby.

> The confession of faith of a seventeenth century scholar who practiced a profession that is at once a science and an art, it represents the union of faith and reason...It may well be accepted by those who share Sir Thomas Browne's faith and by those who do not as expressing the intellectual obligation which has inspired and driven western civilization from its glorious beginnings in a tiny and barren peninsula to this century of its dispersal over the globe.58

To her the most genuine mental life involved all the tension of autonomous individual reason working within a firm renewed knowledge of the principles of the intellectual tradition of society. This was why she felt pulled in two directions by statements of the British academic, Sir Richard Livingstone, that the main objective of education should be training towards right living. She was afraid that educational designs for instilling virtue in the many might make the mistake of implying that virtue could be attained without knowledge.59 To describe the tone and character of such knowledge she reached back to the ethos of the contemplation of God in the Middle Ages. The quality of this dedication could create an inner freedom that outweighed the outer conformity, such constraints in turn stimulated men to extend mind and spirit.

> It was a means to self-realization, to creative ability, to intellectual mastery on the part of men who...recognizing their debt of reason as well as of faith, ultimately possessed themselves in striving after that which was far greater than themselves.60

From the sixteenth century the attitude of Christian contemplation had been under challenge. The emphasis shifted to individual self-realization rather than individual submission. Nonetheless, Hilda Neatby regarded the most genuine creative principles of the modern western period as having arisen from mentalities devoted to searching for and contemplating values outside themselves. The terms she used for these mentalities, "worship", "contemplation" and "fear", in the sense of an awed recognition of sovereign power, all bespoke an orientation to an external authority.61 This was what Hilda Neatby regarded as having been lost in "the liberal experiment" as the Western world moved from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. It had involved worship or contemplation of something outside oneself, reflected in the public school system by certainty about the body of knowledge that conveyed a sense of these universals and the confidence to set down required courses of study for students based on that knowledge. Its mastery was proof of initiation to the status educated man, qualified to receive the transfer of leadership from those who both conserved and created the traditions in the past.

What summary can be made, then, of Hilda Neatby's conservative concept of schooling? She presented this object of schooling as the "educated person". The "educated person" represented the only sure means of avoiding a breakdown of "cultural tradition", here defined as the great ideas of the Western world, especially the English-speaking world. The educational design to achieve this outcome was traditional liberal education with its emphasis on the training of intellect and reason on the one hand and character and values on the other. The training of the intellect involved at its most basic level the three Rs. Beyond this, however, a student had to be led to a clear grasp of the major sources of the Western world's ideas of virtue and truth. These sources were the revealed writings of Christianity and the secular statements of the great western thinkers. The training in character and values at its basic level involved acceptance of life as "hard" and "competitive", along with the sense of right and wrong that went with law-abidingness. Beyond this the student was to be trained to think and act at the highest level of moral seriousness. Together these qualities would create and sustain an individual, aware of the link between intellect and virtue, formed by strenuous thinking carried on within the tension between the autonomous private intellect of the individual and the finished ideas on virtue and truth represented by revelation and tradition.

This tension was central to Hilda Neatby's philosophy of education and was at the core of her criticism of the role of the ideas of progressive education in Canadian schooling. It represented an older, dualistic view of human nature. It implied a view that society's leaders had been and should be those who could demonstrate the mark and the mastery of a training aimed at achieving an intellect self-consciously balanced between autonomy and control. It reflected a view of democracy as a system for the free recognition of excellence to be accomplished through exposure of all minds to the best of the intellectual traditions of society.

The key extra dimension to Hilda Neatby's position was that she believed that the ideas of progressive education reflected a concept of human nature and a relationship between democracy and education which did not reflect the Canadian ethos or experience. To Hilda Neatby Canadian education suffered intellectually, morally and spiritually from the American cultural definitions that were at the basis of progressive education. Canadian educators, she believed, relied too much on American materials, creating a homogenized set of education axioms in Canadian schooling that drew uncritically upon ideas that John Dewey had developed. She especially focussed on John Dewey's notion of democracy and its relation to education, claiming that his definition was problematic in itself and not a reflection of the historical experience of democracy in Canada. What was needed, in her view, and what Canadian progressive educators had failed to provide, was a statement of a Canadian philosophy of education.

It is crucial to an understanding of the nature of Hilda Neatby's conservatism to note and weigh the meaning of the apparently competing priorities within her use of the concept "a Canadian philosophy of education". It is evident that she herself was quite prepared to cite both American and British spokesmen in support of the general philosophy of education that she favoured. Does this then mean that one should dismiss as inconsistent and hypocritical her concerns stated elsewhere about differences in political and cultural values between Canada and the United States? Or might it not be suggested that both elements in her writing reflect how firmly she felt bound to a sense of the school's responsibility to create a particular form of the "educated person". The key quality of this concept was that it represented an ideal to be conserved in the face of broad societal pressures to the contrary. In Canada's position such pressures often appeared most pointedly in the form of tendencies of American life that threatened to replace alternative arrangements and assumptions that had marked Canadian experience to that point. Necessarily, however, this meant that within the United States itself and in other western nations at similarly advanced stages of industrial democracy, there was emerging a group of spokespersons who had the same fear of cultural loss and the same impulse to conserve a particular notion of man's nature and how he might best live. It is with such conservative analysis on the part of American critics of progressive education and the similarity of these ideas to those of Hilda Neatby that the next chapter deals. It is quite possible that Hilda Neatby's form of conservatism may emerge as both national and trans-national in its character precisely because it sought to engage with progressive education at the most fundamental level of its philosophical assumptions about man and society. If this is so then it would have important implications for the adequacy of existing descriptions of the conservative components in the dialectic of public debate on the aims of society and the role of schooling in sustaining these aims both then and now.

NOTES

1 Hilda Neatby, So Little For the Mind (Toronto: Clarke Irwin & Co. Ltd.,1953), Preface.

2 Ibid., p. 15.

3 Ibid., p. 16.

4 Ibid., p. 18.

5 Ibid., p. 18.

6 Ibid., pp. 21-22.

7 Ibid., pp. 22-23.

8 Ibid., p. 31.

9 Ibid., p. 27.

10 Ibid., p. 31.

11 Ibid ., p. 34.

12 Ibid ., pp. 38-39.

13 Ibid., p. 47.

14 Ibid., pp. 53-54.

15 Ibid, p. 63.

16 Ibid., p. 59.

17 Ibid., pp. 74-75.

18 Ibid., pp. 77-79.

19 Ibid., p. 89.

20 Ibid., p. 94.

21 Ibid., p. 98.

22 Ibid., p. 114.

23 Ibid, pp. 133-34.

24 An interesting assumption in view of the tentative findings from a survey of newspaper comment in Toronto in 1953-54 that suggests editorialists felt Hilda Neatby's attacks on progressive education did not apply to Ontario's situation. See Chapter VII.

25 Ibid., p. 148.

26 Ibid., p. 150.

27 Ibid., pp. 169-70.

28 Ibid., pp. 203-4.

29 Ibid., p. 204.

30 Ibid., p. 222.

31 Ibid., pp. 232-33.

32 Ibid., p. 239.

33 Hilda Neatby, "The Debt of Our Reason" in A Temperate Dispute (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., 1954).

34 So Little For the Mind, op. cit., p. 244.

35 Ibid., p. 247. The phrase which Hilda Neatby borrowed here came from the writings of a Canadian academic, John Macdonald, Dean Emeritus of the College of Arts and Science, University of Alberta.

36 Ibid., p. 249.

37 Mortimer Smith, And Madly Teach, in So Little For the Mind op. cit., p. 257.

38 Quoted, R. M. Hutchins, Some Questions About Education in North America, in So Little For the Mind, op. cit., p. 257.

39 So Little For The Mind op. cit., p. 258.

40 So Little For the Mind, op. cit., p. 306.

41 Ibid., p. 333.

42 Ibid., pp. 315-16.

43 Ibid., p. 318.

44 Ibid., p. 322.

45 Ibid., p. 326.

46 Ibid., pp. 327-28.

47 Ibid., p. 331.

48 Hilda Neatby, A Temperate Dispute, (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co., 1954), p. 8.

49 Ibid., p. 9.

50 Ibid., p. 12.

51 Ibid., p. 19. This is one of the relatively few places where Hilda Neatby directly referred to the writings of Arthur Bestor, historian at the University of Illinois, whose Educational Wastelands (1953) played a prominent role in the criticism of progressive education in the United States at this time. She heartily approved of his insistence upon the importance of basing curriculum upon the traditional disciplines. It is notable, however, that Bestor put a lot of effort into designing grade schemes that would make it possible for children of varying abilities to achieve some degree of mastery of such material.

52 Ibid., p. 25.

53 Ibid., p. 33.

54 Ibid., p. 43.

55 Ibid., p. 46.

56 Ibid., p. 47.

57 Sir Thomas Browne, Religio Medici and Other Writings, (London: Everyman's Library, 1965), p. 15.

58 A Temperate Dispute, op. cit., p. 78.

59 Ibid., p. 87.

60 Ibid., p. 90.

61 Ibid., p. 93.

Chapter IV

Essential to an assessment of the national and trans-national character of Hilda Neatby's conservative philosophy of education is a consideration of the larger North American context, in the form of the criticism of progressive education in the United States in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This will provide an essential benchmark for comparing and contrasting these ideas to the conservatism of Hilda Neatby in Canada. In addition, by examining the sufficiency of the existing linkages created by historians between that particular form of conservative criticism in the United States and the larger movement of ideas in that country, it will shed further light on the possible parallel relationship of Hilda Neatby's re-statements of a conservative philosophy of man to the dialectic of ideas in this country.

The wave of criticism that crested over the progressive education movement in the United States occurred within a postwar decade that contained an unusual mixture of liberal and conservative sentiments. These in turn reflected some apparent ambivalence in American society about new directions in American life that had been established during the New Deal and about America's role in a world redefined by the strategic and ideological outcome of World War II. It did not take long for that ambivalence to become apparent following the death of F. D. Roosevelt and the swearing in of Harry Truman as president on April 12, 1945.

Truman sought to reassure the party of F. D. R. of his own commitment to reform in his address to Congress on September 6, 1945, where he stated that "every segment of our population, and every individual has a right to expect from his government a fair deal". Within eighteen months of the new administration, however, the departure of New Dealer Henry Wallace from the cabinet seemed to confirm liberal doubts. On the other hand Truman found himself facing a congressional alliance between Republican conservatives and southern Democrats alarmed by his public support for black civil rights. When the Republicans captured majorities in both Senate and House in the congressional elections of 1946 it looked as if the conservative political reaction after World War I was to be repeated. This majority curtailed trade-unions, limited immigration, ended price and rent controls, and resisted calls for extended social security. As the 1948 presidential election approached the Democrats gloomily nominated Truman by default amid revolts on the left by Henry Wallace and the Progressive Party over Truman's hard-line Russian policy and on the right by Strom Thurmond and the Dixiecrat party over Truman's support for civil rights. On election day, 1948, American liberalism grimly waited for the end of F. D. R.'s New Deal and the coming of Dewey's Republicanism.

The actual outcome of the election, a clear victory in popular vote and electoral college for Truman, seemed to clearly indicate that, contrary to the signs of the previous three years, the political temper of the country was still liberal. Yet it was hard for liberal historians like Eric Goldman to escape the feeling that what was occurring was a liberalism that represented a new stage of what was conventional rather than radical in American political assumptions.

> In an important sense this liberal conquest came as liberalism turned into a form of conservatism. The foreign policy that liberals were espousing in the early Fifties amounted to having the United States serve as the main blockage to the prime revolutionary forces of the day, the Communist ideology and the Red armies. The majorities for Truman were, at least to a large extent, the votes of people who had advanced in income and status during the New Deal and World War II and who feared that an overturn in the White House would endanger their gains.1

It was not to take very long before this liberalism was to be tested by external events and become transposed into a far more open conservatism related to the issue of national security. Truman's second term was plagued by the tensions of McCarthyism

The external events which gave rise to this increasing shrillness in American political life were the Communist victory in China, the Soviet detonation of the atomic bomb, and the Korean War. The echoes of public questions rose louder and louder so that they could still be recreated by the American historians, Samuel Morison and Henry Commager, ten years later.

> How did it happen? How did we "lose" China, and the atomic monopoly all at once, and then come close to losing the Korean War as well? To the average American it was unthinkable that Communism could win on its own, and incredible that Soviet scientists were as clever as American or British. The answer must lie elsewhere. It must lie in subversion and treachery.2

Domestic events seemed to confirm this interpretation of events. The Alger Hiss affair began in 1948 and within a few months of his conviction as a spy for the Soviet Union eleven top American Communists were put on trial for violating the Smith Act of 1940, now reinterpreted by the Supreme Court so as to avoid the customary legal requirement of "clear and present danger" to obtain a conviction for teaching the violent overthrow of government. The end of the beginning came on February 9, 1950, when Senator McCarthy alleged that he had the names of two hundred and five communists within the State Department.

Against this background the overwhelming Republican victory in the presidential election of 1952 seemed the confirmation of a clear, deep and widespread political conservatism among the American people. Yet the congressional vote for the Republican party barely carried the House by a majority of eight and managed only to tie in the Senate. Once again the national mood was a concern with conformity rather than conservatism defined as a set of specific policies, particularly economic.

> Many Republicans looked forward to a complete reversal of Democratic policies which (their platform asserted) led towards socialism and the wrecking of the free enterprise system... Yet, once in power, the Republicans found they could do no more than modify principles, policies and practices which had been woven into the fabric of American life, through the inescapable needs of the age.3

Nonetheless conservatism in the shape of pressure against non-conformity was widespread and powerful. Much of this movement was unofficial.

> Self-appointed guardians of "true" Americanism - patriotic, filiopiestistic and ultraconservative organizations of all shapes joined to preserve the true marrow of Americanism.4

The official sanctions also markedly increased. To the Smith Act of 1940 and the Internal Security Act of 1950 was added the

Communist Control Act of 1954 outlawing the Communist party. Yet it was also in 1954 that the turning point occurred when Joseph McCarthy overstepped himself by challenging the institution of the army itself. Suddenly his conservatism became radicalism and within months his political career was cut short through official censure by the Senate. The new conformity of postwar America had demonstrated that it had limits on the right as well as the left.

Just as the radical ideas of the New Deal appeared to have become the new conformity of most American voters, Lawrence Cremin, the major historian of the progressive education movement in the United States, argued that by the end of World War II progressivism had come to be the "conventional wisdom" in education. Yet within a short time a wave of explicit conservatism was to assault the educational as well as political establishment, based on a parallel perception that a critical stage of erosion had been reached in a key element of national life. While initial sources of this perception in the broader political sphere lay in external events, Cremin's thesis is that the progressive education movement provoked a conservative reaction against itself through a kind of hubris, in the form of the life-adjustment movement, a reflection of what he termed the "Alexandrian" period of the progressive education movement; with all of the connotations of spiritual emptiness conveyed by that term.5 It was this context that gave distinctive character to the "great debate" about progressive education that began in the late 1940s.

Cremin viewed this exaggerated form of progressive education as the immediate cause of the widespread public debate, whose longterm causes had been accumulating for some time. A sense of crisis had already become associated with American public education since the early 1940s over shortages of teachers, inadequate buildings and inequities in funding.6 Testimony presented to the Senate hearings on the issue of federal aid to education in early 1945 contributed to a spreading recognition that public education was in serious trouble.7 In the constitutional circumstances of the United States this particular issue of federal aid produced some confrontations in the late 1940s culminating in the public exchange between Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Cardinal Spellman in the summer of 1949 over public funding of denominational schools.

Another circumstance that forced re-thinking of the objective of public education was the debate over the aims of higher education. The passage of the G.I. Bill in 1944 created access to higher education for a vastly increased and different group of students. James Conant, President of Harvard, and Robert M. Hutchins, Chancellor at the University of Chicago, criticized this proposal as likely to cause a prostitution of academic values to vocationalism. Their point of view was re-expressed in 1945 in the Redbook, published by Harvard University's Committee on the Objectives of a General Education in a Free Society. The debate was sufficient to cause Truman to appoint a President's Commission of Higher Education in July, 1946. The result was the set of reports known collectively as Higher Education for American Democracy, published in 1947-48. It generally advocated more of everything possible for as many as possible. The critiques that it provoked from supporters of traditional academic arrangements guaranteed that the issue of the objectives for higher education would in turn generate debate on the role of the public school system.

Finally, the matter of civil rights for black Americans was also being raised, however tentatively yet, as an issue which American schooling would finally have to confront. Truman appointed a President's Committee on Civil Rights in December, 1946, and ordered its findings to be the basis of a campaign of public education to begin the process of political and social change. The real impact of civil rights was to begin with the school segregation case of Brown versus the Topeka Board of Education in 1954, yet it must be counted as another ingredient of the public consciousness about schooling issues before that date.

The most fundamental pressure for change was coming from the trend of increase in the breadth and duration of education. The impact of the basic growth in population was compounded by the increased percentage of that population attending high school. Between 1920 and 1960, when the population increased by about seventy-five percent, the high school population increased by five hundred percent.8 It is not possible to see sheer growth in school population by itself as causing a crisis for the ideas of progressive education, since in large measure these ideas had become so influential precisely because, as Diane Ravitch noted, they appeared to be an appropriate response to that very situation.

> Both its admirers and detractors acknowledged that progressive ideas had transformed the American public school during the first half of the twentieth century. Progressive concept proved to be particularly

> appropriate in easing the transition to mass secondary education.9

Nonetheless the apparent fit between progressive ideas and demographic situation occurred piecemeal over a considerable period. There had been no situation where at one time all the implications of progressive education both for process and objectives were open for reflection and debate. One might, therefore, expect a different kind of reaction to a model of progressive education that was presented whole, as happened with the life-adjustment movement. Here was an elaborate articulation of all the corollaries, based on a partial and uncomplicated view of the objectives of progressive education, and so energetically touted by official authorities that it had every appearance of becoming a design to which all public school systems would be expected to conform.

It might be said then, that although pressures of funding, teacher shortage, the objectives of higher education, and the growing issue of civil rights had created a situation by mid-century where many questions in American education were open for debate, the particular role of the life-adjustment movement within that context was to provide a catalyst for debate by providing both a comprehensive and an exaggerated expression of some key trends in progressive education which critics could focus on.

The key to the elements of the progressive movement that were drawn out into this pedagogy lay in the changed perception of the school's relation to society from Dewey's idea of "the school-as-lever-of-social-reform to the school-as-a-mechanism-to- adjust-the-individual-to-society".10 Both of these approaches represented utilitarian view of education, but the latter stressed founding curriculum upon inventories of immediate adolescent interests and concerns, along with socialization towards the dominant values and social habits of American society. Diane Ravitch traces the lineage of this educational philosophy from the NEA's Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education and Franklin Rabbit's The Curriculum at the end of World War 1 up to the major report of the Educational Policies Commission, Education for All American Youth, published towards the end of World War 11.

> Again the updated Cardinal Principles was set forth as the ideal education. Again...progressive educators described the ideal curriculum, restructured to meet "the imperative needs of youth," defined in terms of preparation for citizenship, vocation, consumption, family living, economic understanding and so forth.11

When World War II ended this life-adjustment education was the particular form of progressive education that thrust itself forward as the apotheosis of "modern education".

The life-adjustment movement originated in 1945 when the United States Office of Education sponsored a conference to discuss the educational needs of students who seemed to fall between vocational and academic programs, a group estimated to be sixty percent of American youth. They were said not to be receiving the "life-adjustment" education they needed. Regional conferences followed in 11946 and a national conference was held in 1947. That conference broadly defined the concept as "guidance and education in citizenship, home and family life, use of leisure, health, tools of learning, work experience and occupational adjustment".12 The

Unites States Office of Education gave full support to the movement. In 1947 the Office appointed a National Commission of Life Adjustment Education for Youth and a second Commission was appointed from 1950 to 1954. Much of this effort went into conferences to help define the concept in more exact terms, an aim not entirely realized according to Diane Ravitch.

> The official definition was that life adjustment education "better equips all American youth to live democratically with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society as home members, workers, and citizens." What that meant required fourteen additional statements (for example..."It recognizes that many events of importance happened a long time ago, but holds that the real significance of these events is in their bearing upon life of today"). But even with all of this elaboration, its meaning was still unclear, though it surely meant a stress on "functional" objectives, like vocation and health, and a rejection of traditional academic studies.13

When such unembarrassed anti-intellectualism became the trademark of this postwar restatement of progressive education, and one that with so much official support appeared likely to become the national definition of the objectives of public schooling, it acted as a catalyst for the wave of public criticism that was to follow. According to Ravitch it was the last straw for those who had long expressed concerns about progressive education.

> Critics...now found in life adjustment education a bloated target...it carried the utilitarianism and group conformism of the latter-day progressivism to its ultimate trivialization. This vast outpouring of criticism, coming as it did at the same time as the teacher shortage, the schools' appeal for federal aid, and the onset of the "baby

> boom", made it clear that schools were in a crisis too fundamental to ignore.14

The fact that it was the life-adjustment movement that created a "critical mass" was to be important for the shape of the debate that followed.

The appearance of the debate to many defenders of progressive education was that out of a blue sky had come a swarm of complaints that often crystallized in a series of bitter local confrontations manipulated by extreme right-wing lobby groups. This perception of a "plot" against progressive education received wide coverage in 1951 when David Hulburd, a professional journalist, described the dismissal of Willard Goslin, the progressive superintendent of Pasadena's schools. Hulburd's account, This Happened in Pasadena, was based throughout on the notion of a conspiracy.

> It is a fact that certain forces, vicious, well-organized, and coldly calculating would like to change the face of education in the United States. This they must not be allowed to do.15

In Hulburd's view, the discontents of the local groups in Pasadena were coordinated and articulated through affiliation with Allen Zoll's National Council for American Education, one of several national pressure groups openly committed to eradicating perceived tendencies to socialism in American schools and colleges. The forced resignation of Goslin was followed by an investigation of curriculum, methods and personnel in Pasadena, along with loyalty oaths and the dismissal of those who refused to sign. According to Lawrence Cremin, Hulburd's analysis became the basis of a widespread interpretation of events by beleaguered defenders of progressive education.

> The notion of a "calculated, far-reaching plot" was quickly taken up by progressives, and became the leitmotif of their counterattack during the next five years. A rash of pamphlets and articles appeared directing attention to a new genre of ultra-rightist, frequently rabble-rousing citizens' group that had entered the arena of educational policy-making.16

This view was promoted in the January, 1952, issue of Progressive Education edited by Archibald W. Anderson of the University of Illinois. He divided critics into two groups: well-intentioned but wrong-headed critics who "generally favour the same lines of progress as the educators", and a second group with evil motives, composed of "chronic tax conservationists", "congenital reactionaries", "super-patriots", and "academic conservatives".17 This view of what was happening was also put forward in the 1953 anthology, Public Education Under Criticism, by Winfield Scott and Clyde Hill, who aimed at making educators aware of representative criticism and possible ways of responding. They illustrated the scale of the challenge by calculating the annual total of entries in the Education Index under the heading "Public Schools - Criticisms" between 1942, when that heading was first introduced, and 1953. There was a clear increase by 1949, but the 1951 figure was threefold that of 1949.18 Although the editors hypothesized that a good deal of the contemporary criticism could be ascribed to the existing social psychology, created by perceptions of Cold War military threat, economic fragility, and a disruptive pace of change, they also argued that this public mood was being exploited by groups who were fundamentally opposed to the basic assumptions of a public school system.

> More people than is generally recognized actually oppose or have serious doubts about the desirability of public education. A small minority of the total group openly show their disapproval, often covering their purpose with the mantle of patriotism or economic orthodoxy.19

The most sustained effort to document this thesis came ten years after the Goslin affair in Pasedena in a study by Mary Ann Raywid. From her analysis of the criticism of progressive education she developed a thesis about the pattern of attack on school systems. She believed the pattern to be the escalation of a complaint by an individual or small group on a specific local issue to include broad criticism of progressive education and warnings of subversion of national values. The second level involved affiliation with and direction from national lobby groups, usually of a broadly conservative nature.20 One such group, America's Future, was used by Raywid to illustrate her argument that educational issues were becoming distorted through being used simply as a vehicle for wider political ends.

> The danger lies in the fact that America's Future - along with numerous groups of comparable scope and persuasion - has managed to intertwine condemnation of the school with a specific political outlook; the credo of political conservatism. The result is that those subscribing to extremely conservative economic, social or political views form what is perhaps the largest, most vocal amalgam of educational critics in the country.21

Larger audiences for criticisms of public education came not only from collaboration of local critics with nationally organized pressure groups but also feature articles in nationally distributed periodicals. Articles concerned with anti-Americanism in the schools were often carried by self-consciously patriotic magazines such as the American Legion Magazine or of the extreme right such as the National Republic, but it was the wider audience supplied to the academic critics in particular through the pages of well-established periodicals of literary and political comment that particularly concerned Raywid.

> The magazines that helped the earlier critic have a relatively small circulation and go to special interest groups...In today's situation, the magazines giving considerable space to school critics and their charges are magazines of mass circulation. Some are "prestige" periodicals that the well-informed must be acquainted with, even though one disagrees with their editorial policies...Thus the magazine editor is extending a weapon to the current educational critic which was not available to his earlier counterpart.22

The most troubling question for Raywid, however, and the charge that she seemed most concerned to pin on the academic critic was whether there existed "formal networks of cooperation" between such critics and the major conservative national pressure groups.23 She regarded the use by conservative groups of some statements by these critics as a blameworthy kind of assistance to groups whose aim was to harm public education.

> ...there is much to be said for judging an endeavor good or bad in terms of its consequences as well as its intent or motive...if we hold the liberal arts critic accountable for the results he helped produce, then he is burdened with much more blame that he has been willing to accept.24

Much of Raywid's attention went to the Council for Basic Education, an umbrella group for many academic critics of progressive education. She believed there were strong ties between extreme conservative groups and the CBE's role as the "dominant spokesman" for the new wave of criticism, and that it represented a more sinister factor than its public face of commentary by disinterested academics would suggest.25

Even at the time of the debate itself in the early 1950s, however, doubts were being expressed whether the conspiracy theory fairly represented the sole or even the major motives and concerns of the critics. A challenge to David Hulburd's analysis of the Goslin Affair had appeared two years later in Mary L. Allen's Education as Indoctrination. As a member of the citizen group which was at the centre of the attack on Goslin her account was unquestionably partial; yet it was less a tone of vindictiveness than of bewilderment that characterized this account. The allegations of a Communist subversion of America through the school system were there, along with the interpretation of the New Deal and New Education as parallel paths to the same goal, an international collectivist society.26 There is also no doubt, however, that she believed some basic change had taken place in the character of education as a central value in American culture.

> In the past, an educated person was considered to be one who had accumulated a storehouse of information and knowledge. The gathering of knowledge through the educative process was not considered a selfish goal or a waste to society. It was a respected goal because an

> educated man was more likely to abet social progress through invention and wisdom.27

Allegedly even the vocabulary of the traditional view of democratic education was altered by progressive educators; sentiments and principles commonly associated with democracy were given unexpected extensions of meaning.28

There is a strong tone of hurt and resentment in Allen's description of what she perceived as Goslin's disparagement of the concern of the group over curriculum. The group's agenda of concerns included more stress on the three Rs, a fixed curriculum, more discipline, greater stress on the teaching of American history and civics, higher academic standards, and the teaching of moral and spiritual values.29 She was acutely frustrated over "Goslin's impenetrable mantle of 'professionalism'".

> When people asked sincere questions about the origin of progressive education, they were told that some people want to turn the clock back twenty years. Parents, who were eager that their children learn about the great American heritage through history were called reactionaries. Those who asked for drill, phonetics, more emphasis on the three Rs and teaching the alphabet, were looked upon with suspicion or amusement.30

What this suggests is that in a situation that progressive educators regarded as the clearest example of right-wing conspiracy the critics of progressive education were raising some basic questions about the purposes of schooling. There is no doubt that the basic issues being raised were often accompanied by terms and idioms that reflected the political tensions of that period, yet the underlying concerns themselves were fundamental challenges about some of the basic notions of progressive education itself.

This different view of what was at issue in the great debate was reflected in the analysis of Dean Hollis L. Caswell of Teacher's College. In 1953, he challenged the "plot theory" and argued who had basic questions to ask about the whole philosophy of progressive education.

> Considered separately, these attacks may seem to represent the usual sort of criticism that any public activity in a democratic society must undergo..But it is my conviction that if we look deeper. studying the longrange impact and seeking the interrelationships of current criticisms, far more is involved. It is my belief that a reappraisal is in progress of some of the most basic aspects of our public system.31

The issues being raised involved the operationalization of the concept of equality in education in a school system for the children of all the people, the question of whether material to be studied should be selected because of its academic rigor or its child-interest, and the place of specif religious teachings in the imparting of values. Caswell left no doubt of where he himself stood in these issues, but he made equally clear that a credible alternative set of principle was being put forward in the great debate. This was not, or not mainly, a witchhunt: there was a genuine reassessment in progress.

The most extended treatment of this "great reappraisal" had already begun to take place at the time of Caswell's analysis, in a number of major publications on education, The major authors we Mortimer-Smith, Bernard Iddings Bell, Albert Lynd, Arthur Bestor, Robert Hutchins and Paul Woodring. Their books became key reference points in the debate over educational philosophy that underpinned the public imbroglio of school board sessions, public meetings and letters to the editor. They can be used to provide a checklist of major criticism of progressive education in "the great debate" in the United States; such a checklist can be used as a benchmark for analyzing the concerns raised in the Canadian debate. In synthesizing the ideas of a number of authors, or even of the same author at different times, there is a danger that one may represent these ideas as more systematic and consciously interrelated than they were, or fail to note changes of emphasis that occurred over time. Nonetheless, the risk has been taken here in order to provide as explicit a template as possible for identifying the degree of uniqueness in the pattern of concerns in the Canadian debate.

The concerns, the analysis, the proposals of these writers can be arranged into a single line of argument without violence to their original contexts. The argument began with a sense of problems with the present, accusations about the role of progressive education in aggravating these problems, proposed reforms or retrenchments that were seen as desirable, and concluded with dark references to the power of progressive educators to resist these proposals. It seemed that it was not the classroom but society as a whole which these critics imaged in their mind when they expressed concern and fear over the instability and restlessness of their time. Many agreed with Mortimer Smith that there was a deterioration in learning and culture due not only to a particular philosophy of education but also to some general tendencies of egalitarian democracy and popular culture.

> There are prophets among us who say this decline is but a part of the general vulgarization of values inevitable in a society dominated by the whims and desires of the masses; they declare gloomily that democracy can ultimately lead only to the decay of civilization.32

The sense of alarm was principally expressed in terms of cultural and spiritual values, but Arthur Bestor was not alone when he used the setting of the Cold War to insist that the preservation and increase of national strength required intellectual schooling.

These two main categories of concerns carried over into the analysis of education. They viewed progressive education as suffering intellectually and culturally from excessive contemporaneity. Albert Lynd complained that pupils were being taught less and less about "the painfully accumulated culture of this harassed civilization".33 Associated with this "accumulated culture" in Lynd's critique were beliefs in transcendental natural laws and the abiding validity of certain moral principles which he saw being undermined by the philosophy of John Dewey.

> In most of the older religious traditions human nature was viewed with suspicion and subjected to efforts to make it behave properly in relation to some transcendental ideal. Dewey insists that human nature itself is the only source of workable moral guides. He believes that the effort to find transcendental moral rules has been...wrong...because there is no known deity or "higher" reality whence such principles may be derived....34

At another level progressive education was accused of leading to a decline in skills in fundamentals of reading and writing along with the intellectual rigour required for advanced studies. In 1953 Arthur Bestor published Educational Wastelands in which he promoted the importance of intellectual training of citizens for the sake of American political democracy and "as a direct consequence,...industrial prosperity and military security".35 In 1955 he published The Restoration of Learning which re-emphasized what he regarded as the neglected concept of intellectual training as "a planned, sequential, systematic, long-continued process...the content and logic of which are determined by the criteria of the scholarly disciplines themselves".36

The solution for Bestor, as for most other critics, was the traditional model of liberal education, based upon aristocratic and academic models but extended to become a curriculum for all. He believed that the purpose and nature of education should not be altered when extended from an "aristocratic few" to the whole citizenry, and that this was the original ideal of nineteenth century reformers like Barnard, who hoped that education would bring all classes together "to raise society to a higher level of refinement and happiness".37 To these ends Robert Hutchins, the most widely recognized publicist for the restoration of liberal education in postwar United States, would have added the importance of shared cultural literacy for communication and understanding within and between human communities. He saw dangers in the emphasis placed in progressive education on the need for a variety of courses to meet a variety of individual needs. Hutchins did not dispute that men were different, but he believed that education should concentrate on the quality in all men which was the same.

> One trouble with education in the West is that it has emphasized the respects in which men are different; this is what excessive specialization means. The purpose of basic education is to bring out common humanity, a consummation more urgently needed today than at any time in the last five hundred years.38

For him the choice of materials to convey this sense of common humanity was not problematic. Without hesitation Hutchins identified the evolution of the Graeco-Hebraic tradition in the Western world as providing the principal guide to the model of human nature and therefore of education. Only a liberal education as defined in that particular tradition would provide the means for men to speak to one another, so that for him the most telling metaphor for education was the induction of the student into what he called "The Great Conversation" of mankind about these ideas.39 This concept of induction into an existent tradition represented a view of education as providing training for the student in not an imitation but a knowledge and consciousness of a set of ideas initially external to the student. Hutchins believed deeply that the more the student oriented his own maturation in terms of this external model of controlled and self-restrained behavior and taste the more the learner fulfilled his genuine humanity. The road to this orientation was to be through intellectual effort.

For Arthur Bestor, who went further than most critics in his efforts to present a curricular plan by which a genuinely intellectual education could be offered to and required of all students, subject matter should be based on academic disciplines that promoted a particular quality of thinking. The content of the curriculum, he believed, must be determined by academics and, harking back to the role of the Committee of Ten at the turn of the century, he called on the academic world to regain its earlier directing voice on the objectives of public school education. In the way of this "restoration of learning" in the eyes of Bestor and the others lay the enlarged bureaucracies of public education and teacher training. There decision-making was in the hands of a group whose claims of professional status and opportunities for professional advancement seemed bound up with the growth of models of public schooling that rejected the traditional role of academics in the design of public schooling. Bestor wrote, in exaggerated and almost hysterical language that carried heavy overtones of the Cold War, of an "interlocking directorate" of professional educators, members of faculties of education, administrators and bureaucrats, who were promoting anti-intellectualism and using pressure to silence critics within public education systems.40

The pattern of the concerns raised by these major critics of progressive education during "the great debate" seemed to reflect a view that the transformation of American schooling by the progressive education movement had represented a choice of roads. It reiterated an older, alternative approach to education that emphasized the preservation of a tradition of common intellectual and cultural values, perceived particularly as western and English speaking, and based upon a dualistic view of human nature that saw proper individual growth as arising from imitation of an external intellectual model of controlled and self-restrained behavior and taste.41

The view that an essential sector of the criticism of progressive education in the "great debate" represented an enduring and coherent tradition of educational conservatism goes behind the immediate setting of the events to examine whether they represent an outlook that is broader in its relationship to the progressive education movement as a whole, indeed to the general development of democratic culture in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. For example, Richard Hofstadter's study of anti-intellectualism in American life is quite definite in setting the debate against an accelerating trend of anti-intellectualism in twentieth-century America.

> To some degree the life-adjustment movement was a consequence of the crisis in the morale of American youth which has been observable since the Second World War. But it was more than this: it was an attempt on the part of education leaders and the United States Office of Education to make completely dominant the values of the crusade against intellectualism that had been going on since 1910.42

He viewed the argument over life-adjustment as part of a larger argument over the nature of mass education and mass culture. Hofstadter was not alone in his perception. Rush Welter noted in his study of the relationship between popular education and democratic thought in America that an increasing number of commentaries, beginning with Walter Lippman's publication of Public Opinion in 1922, had expressed open reservations about the meliorist assumptions that underlay the wider progressive movement.

> The twentieth century has dealt harshly with liberal democratic theories, and above all with the American belief in universal suffrage made competent through education. Sensitive to the shortcomings of populist democracy but committed to its hopes, the progressive generation gathered together most of the doctrines of nineteenth century liberalism for one final assault on national evils. A popular reaction was inevitable, and when it came it took the form of disillusionment with both democracy and democratic education.43

Edgar Gumbert and Joel Spring, in their study of American education in the twentieth century, set the evolution of the key ideas of educational progressivism against the background of the redefinition of the values of individualism and community in twentieth-century liberalism and conservatism. Out of a complex situation in which liberal supporters of the progressive movement and conservative opponents of the New Deal ironically contributed together to promote cultural values of individualism and self assertion, Gumbert and Spring pointed out how this attachment to individualism was not without its Cassandras within the progressive education movement: "John Dewey, for example, in his writings dating to the late nineteenth century, sought a cohesive community with shared values, needs and goals and the development of the individual".44 Similarly Adolphe Meyer, otherwise not sympathetic to the critics of progressive education whom he called the "essentialists", found it necessary to note how even some of progressive education's most thoughtful supporters, such as Boyd Henry Bode, of Ohio State University, had expressed doubts about the concept of freedom being promoted.45 At the same time that Bode was expressing these caveats John Dewey had found it necessary to state in a series of lectures hosted by Kappa Delta Phi that some progressive educators were in danger of missing the proper end of education, self-control in judgement and use of intelligence based on a field of knowledge that "gradually approximates that in which subject matter is presented to the skilled, mature person".46 Patricia Graham's major study of the Progressive Education Association suggests that Dewey was touching on an increasingly serious problem within progressive education in the 1940s.

> Quite often educators assumed that, having established the "needs" of adolescents, it followed that their schools should meet them. Not very often did progressive educators of the late thirties and early forties concern themselves with his cultural heritage or even for meeting his specifically intellectual "needs". A certain anti-intellectualism by no means always intended, became the inevitable concomitant of the successful pursuit of the goal of psychological and social adjustment.47

It is appropriate to conclude this inventory of historical commentaries on the "great debate" by noting the key connecting idea between the particular thrust of criticism revealed in the literature review and the explanations given by two major educational historians of this aspect of progressive education, Lawrence Cremin and Diane Ravitch. The link exists in the concluding reference made by both to a loss of belief in the capacity of progressive education to create a democracy of genuine culture as distinct from a culture of genuine democracy. In his preface to Transformation of the School Cremin had said that progressivism implied "the radical faith that culture could be democratized without being vulgarized, the faith that everyone could share not only in the benefits of the new sciences but in the pursuit of the arts as well". Ravitch concluded her analysis with a wistful reprise of Cremin's statement.

> As the movement pursued utilitarianism in headlong fashion, the "radical faith" of the early progressives that "culture could be democratized without being vulgarized" was forgotten, and in some well-known progressive programs it seemed that culture could be democratized only by being vulgarized.48

Both Cremin and Ravitch saw the progressive education movement as having risked an erosion of the transmission of western culture. Neither of them pursued this angle of interpretation to determine the priority of this sentiment in the "great debate" of 1949-53. In the material reviewed here, it takes on the dimension of the single most persistent source of the proposals for an alternate, conservative philosophy of education.

On the basis of these sources of the "great debate" in the United States, it can be concluded that the debate expressed two sides of a genuine conservative tradition. One side reflected the fears and partisan feelings about economic individualism and collectivism generated by the New Deal and sharpened by the tensions of the Cold War; the other reflected a classic view of the nature of man and the way for men to best live to fulfill their humanity, a view which had been dominant in the philosophic idealism of the late nineteenth century. Together they represented at that time and place a special combination of particular concepts of philosophical truth and political power, regenerated by the ambivalent mood of American society after World War II as it tried to come to grips with deep changes taking place in the social and political fabric. Issues that were essentially educational and curricular became a metaphor in such circumstances for a conservative re-examination of the identity of the nation.

From this perspective the debate can be placed in the context of a revival of academic conservative writing in the United States in the early 1950s. What was most significant was that much of the writing in this vein was not by conservatives but liberals. Arthur M. Schlesinger, for example, in his 1949 study of the politics of freedom, The Vital Center, set forth a very tempered view of the possibilities of human nature.

> Official liberalism had long been inextricably identified with a picture of man as perfectible, as endowed with sufficient wisdom and selflessness to endure power and to use it infallibly for the general good. The Soviet experience, on top of the rise of fascism, reminded my generation rather forcibly that man was, indeed, imperfect, and that the corruptions of power could unleash great evil in the world. We discovered a new dimension of experience - the dimension of anxiety, guilt and corruption (or it may well be, as Reinhold Niebuhr has brilliantly suggested, that we were simply rediscovering ancient truths which we should never have forgotten.49

The commonalities of the educational debate with the renewed respectability of academic conservatism extended to an assessment of the quality of popular culture which industrialism had helped make literate at the same time that it falsified it. To Schlesinger industrialism had made "culture available to all at the expense of making much of it the expression of a common fantasy rather than of a common experience."50

This chastened liberal view seemed to partially reflect the decade immediately following the defeat of Nazi totalitarianism in which Soviet Communism was seen as the present and real threat. Some observers have suggested this caused many former radicals and liberals of the 1930s who had flirted with Marxism to experience partial guilt and responsibility for the perceived threats to United States security.51 This attitude of self-examination and self-incrimination led to the view that it was not sufficient or adequate to preserve the tradition of western liberalism but also of conservatism. The character of the conservatism contemplated here was something much broader and more traditional than laissez-faire arguments against the interventionism of the New Deal. Peter Viereck, who has been called the "intellectual leader" of the "new" conservatives, described the true conservative as one "politically descended from Burke" who "distrusts human nature and believes (politically speaking) in Original Sin, which must be restrained by the ethical traffic lights of traditionalism".52 He dismissed what he called "superficial" conservatives bent on abolishing New Deal laws "most of which are the mildest, revolution-preventing reforms, passed by both parties".53

If Vierick was the most publicly recognizable conservative publicist, writers such as Russell Kirk and Clinton Rossiter were more representative of the sympathy and support for conservatism at the academic level. Both of these writers saw it as their task to uncover and build a history of the conservative mind in the United States.

Rossiter analyzed the events and ideas of the men who made the American Revolution and described them as holding "a philosophy of ethical, ordered liberty that the American people still cherish as their most precious intellectual possession".54 Russell Kirk's history of conservative ideas draws heavily in its later section on Irving Babbitt's earlier condemnation of the influence of Rousseauite romanticism on American values and the stress he placed on the propriety and necessity of man recognizing some higher authority outside his own impulse.55 Kirk regarded this belief in the existence of a transcendent moral order, to which we ought to try to orient society, as one of the first principles of conservatism.56 For him the mid-twentieth century left only two ideologies designed to provide such parameters for the socialization of individuals; the new totalitarianism and the traditional conservatism.

> The Benthamite doctrine of rational self-interest and the Rousseauistic doctrine of human benevolence both have gone glimmering; there remain the police-agent and the camp for "saboteurs", as in Russia, or the old motive to morality and diligence which conservative had always believed in: religious sanctions, tradition, habit and private interest restrained by prescriptive institution. It is to be seen, within this century, whether the conservatives can manage to force Sin, the ancient corruption of man, the proclivity to violence, envy, avarice, back within the moral confines of Western society....57

The conservatism expressed here, while provoked by the circumstances of its time, was clearly one that based itself on the same long-standing perceptions of the nature of man and of the necessary arrangements for the acculturation of the individual that lay behind the conservative view of education. Such findings strongly suggest that alongside the contemporary educational or political/social events any adequate explanation of the extensive wave of criticism of progressive education in the United States must take account of the recurrence of a coherent conservative philosophy of education that appears to have been a more persistent and substantial counterpoint to the ideas of progressive education in the "public mind" than existing interpretations of the "great debate" have suggested.

These conclusions have important bearing on the issues with which this chapter began. The elements of Hilda Neatby's conservatism clearly show a strong similarity to the fundamental concerns raised by these American critics of progressive education. It is true that she clearly found it unnecessary, in light of the Canadian experience, to respond to that strain of conservatism that concerned itself with the values of progressive education in terms of a competition between economic collectivism and economic individualism. Neither did she find it a pressing matter in terms of Canada's world role, to set the issue within the context of national strength and security at a time of perceived international threat. Nonetheless both conservative critiques have consciously engaged with the issue of progressive education at a fundamental level of a philosophy of human nature. A major corollary of the conclusion reached here on the character of the "great debate" in the United States is that existing interpretations of that conservatism have fallen short of considering whether it might form part of a much more elemental dialectic in modern industrial democracies. This conservative view of man and his purposes, which is based on and sees the need for transcendentalist authorities to both constrain and attract the pattern of human behavior, sought to continually engage itself with all of the purely instrumentalist pressures of such a civilization. Such trans-national parallels between the conservatism of Hilda Neatby and the critics in the United States leaves unexamined however, the question of whether such a conservatism by Hilda Neatby might equally and independently reflect a rhythm and content of national cultural ideas in Canada. In other words, if the trans-national elements in Hilda Neatby's conservatism have been demonstrated, the genuineness of its national character remains to be shown in the chapters to follow.

NOTES

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3 Ibid., p. 958.

4 Ibid., p. 931.

5 Lawrence Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 333.

6 Ibid., p. 339.

7 Diane Ravitch, The Troubled Crusade (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), p. 3ff.

8 Morison and Commager, op. cit., p. 935.

9 Ravitch, op. cit., p. 45.

10 Ibid., p. 48.

11 Ibid., p. 62.

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22 Ibid., pp. 69-70.

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39 Ibid., p. 5.

40 Bestor, Educational Wastelands, op. cit., p. 121.

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44 Edgar G. Gumbert and Joel H. Spring, The Superschool and the Superstate: American Education in the Twentieth Century, 1918-1970, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1974), p. 11.

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CHAPTER V

If it can be demonstrated that Hilda Neatby's conservatism was similar in many of its elements and emphasis to concerns being raised by intellectuals in other societies, did this conservatism also exemplify a key tradition of thought within the national intellectual history of Canada itself? Previous interpretations of her conservative position have been based on assumptions that discouraged any inquiry for a separate experience in Canada of a conservative cultural philosophy. F. Henry Johnson characterized Hilda Neatby's ideas as borrowed wholesale from the critics in the United States.1 Hugh Stevenson emphasized the native caution which had put constraints on the implementation of progressive education in Canada.2 If, however, her views can be set into the background of a philosophic outlook that played a key role in Canada's intellectual history then the national character of that position becomes a major element in weighing the significance of the Neatby debate. Recent studies on the importance of philosophic idealism to the history of ideas in Canada reveal suggestive parallels with Hilda Neatby's conservative arguments. The aim here is to investigate the degree to which Neatby's views as set out in So Little For the Mind receive their most genuine intellectual lineage when set against the background of the influence of philosophic idealism in Canada. The focus will be on the emergence and evolution of that philosophy within the intellectual life of Canada. How far do the persistent themes of philosophic idealism correspond to the concerns of Hilda Neatby and what implications might this have for the perpetuation in and through the Neatby debate of a strong Canadian conservative tradition in cultural ideas?

The distinctive role of the ideas of philosophic idealism in the intellectual history and ethos of Canada has emerged with increasing clarity and substance in historical studies over the last decade. The importance of idealist philosophy in nineteenth century Europe had long been a standard part of general histories of the philosophies of education. Such accounts customarily began with Immanuel Kant's rejection of both the Cartesian view that all knowledge was innate and the Lockian notion that even our most basic organizing concepts were the result solely of the functioning of our senses. While our knowledge of the world did involve sense impressions, understanding could not exist without the use of a-priori categories, such as sequence and causal relation, that were inherent in the structure of the mind. This view of the determining role of the human intellect when making judgements about the genuine nature of objects became the preamble to extensive claims about the way in which men could, with confidence, set about determining the standards and principles on which to found the one best way to live. Human reason, it was asserted, brought non-experiential concepts to bear upon empirical evidence in order to infuse it with meaning. Reason also operated in the realm of morals by enabling man to find, by means of intellectual reflection on his own nature, the values and moral feelings that constituted ideal duty. It was the confidence claimed for the capacity of the mind's reason to recognize such ideals from its own nature and workings that later commentators have identified as the basis of Kant's influence.

> The traditional view, as he (Kant) understood it, held that everything in nature is an appearance to us of something we can not experience - of the now, the world, and God. But on his view, everything we can experience is a result of the mind's activities of sensing, imagining, and understanding... Everything we experience, therefore, depends in part upon the human mind...This leads to the view that every conceivable existence requires the existence of mind - to a kind of idealism; and this Kantian doctrine dominated many areas of thought long after the work of Kant, himself, was finished.3

Two circumstances caused these idealist ideas to have an especially important role in Canada in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth. The first was the arrival from Scotland of John Watson as professor of theology at Queen's University in 1872. The second was the relationship between the idealist philosophy and the terms in which Canadian supporters of the British imperial idea expressed their view of the moral and cultural qualities of that enterprise.

Continuing recognition of John Watson as a professional Kantian scholar in his own right has been noted by A. B. McKillop, the Canadian intellectual historian.4 In the context of the history of ideas in Canada, however, McKillop, who has done most in the last ten years to uncover the influence of John Watson's idealist views, suggests that the extensiveness of Watson's reputation in his own time in Canada arose from a more general basis. His fusion of Kantian idealism and Christian theology provided a world view and a language in which to resolve the intellectual dilemmas and express the strong sense of mission of the intellectual and cultural leaders of Canadian society at the end of the nineteenth century.

Key elements in the intellectual synthesis that Watson presented can be drawn out of a non-technical commemorative piece Watson wrote for the Queen's Quarterly on the occasion of the death of his own mentor, Edward Caird, one of the leading British idealist philosophers of the age. Watson emphasized that Caird's whole philosophic endeavor, carried on within a context of Christian views, aimed at the expression of a "rational faith" which could be reconciled with the methods and conclusions of both the higher criticism and natural sciences.5 Watson gave a delightful and vivid description of how Caird's teachings provided a release and resolution of his own mental struggles to reassure himself that the broader reaches of life and the world operated on the same moral and intellectual constructs as his private thinking. Though, of course, these remarks reflected the intensity of Watson's own nature they may provide some representative insight into the strength of response by Watson's own generation in Canada.

> All this was nothing less than the disclosure of a new world to a Scottish youth, who from his early years had been accustomed to roll like a sweet morsel under his tongue such abstract themes as the relations of faith and works, predestination and foreknowledge...The close shell of traditional Calvinism was burst, and we gradually learned to seek for truth in the interpretation of experience, conceived in the widest way as the experience of the race, and as comprehending the vast, slow, never hasting, never resting, movement of humanity.6

Along with the sense of intellectual relief one encounters here the idea that was to be so basic to the view of learning with which Hilda Neatby identified: the belief that private human reason could generate the values and standards by which life was meant to be lived and find illustration and confirmation of these in the historical record of works of man's mind.

Both of these qualities of idealist philosophy were reflected in Watson's own teachings at Queen's University. When he gave his inaugural lecture on October 16, 1872, his words made apparent the quality of certitude that was offered by his fusion of religion and Kantian Absolute Idealism. He referred to a philosophy that "elevates itself above all mere opinions...and lives and moves in the realm of necessary truth" and is capable of "discovering the essential rationality that...shines through all the outward manifestations of Nature and of Spirit."7 In Christianity and Idealism, published fifteen years later, Watson emphasized again how the human mind was to be interpreted on simultaneous levels as a contrast between the actual and the ideal and as a reflection of progress toward the ideal basis for living.8 When joined together these notions created Watson's idea of the quality that should most infuse the basic general education that all should receive, especially those who were to be undergoing more specialized training in the professions. He called for a religious attitude, not in terms merely of feeling but of reasoning that was both reflective upon itself and the created works of man.9 This, he believed, would be the means of preserving the religious outlook in Canadian life, meaning by religion "not...a particular set of ideas about the world and ourselves, but that...intense belief in the nobility of the higher life and in the possibility of its realization, which is the support and the inspiration of a nation."10

Altogether the intellectual influence of John Watson upon Canadian thought remained extensive and consistent throughout his career. His world view began with Kant's rejection of both the subjective idealist and the empiricist traditions. His idealist view was that even the simplest phase of knowledge involved the activity of the subject and that the world as it really is illustrates, complements and obeys the same rational processes that the mind uses in reflecting upon itself. This power of rational self-reflection gave man the capability of uncovering the law of his own development and therefore of setting before himself an ideal which in itself represented the genuine end to which all prior development had been striving. Ontology thus became gathered up in teleology and genuine spiritual life became the individual's earnest commitment to the conscious realization of this ideal within himself. The whole arena of public life equally became, according to Watson's teachings, a proper subject for philosophic idealism.

> Thus philosophy ceased to be a mere academic theory, or even a special investigation into a particular section of human life, and expanded into the noble discipline of an interpretation of social and political life and institutions, of art and religion, as these developed into even higher and more perfect forms in the great secular process of history.11

Such was the doctrine of the philosophic idealism that John Watson brought before the intellectual and cultural leaders of Canada at the turn of the century.

A. B. McKillop's studies of the role played in the intellectual life of Canada by the philosophy studied at Canadian universities in the era of John Watson's dominance have emphasized the crisis in ideas at the turn of the century. Some system of ideas was anxiously being sought for that would provide an accommodation between religion, science and the issues being raised by the emergent industrial society of late-nineteenth century Canada. It removed a potential rivalry between the moral nature of man and his intellectual activity by claiming that in their most genuine form each was promoted by the other. It located the Darwinian hypothesis within a teleological structure that preserved the notion of design and purpose in the universe. It claimed that God's plan for mankind was being worked out through the secular process of history, a spiritual progress that could be inferred through the rational understanding of the "unfolding of the consciousness of the race" in terms of which both individual and collective civic behavior and public policy should be assessed.12

It is striking that this double emphasis upon the role of individual reason in uncovering and then creatively subordinating itself to a perceived moral outcome also appeared in this generation of thinkers among those who counted themselves positivists rather than idealists. A. B. McKillop's study of William Dawson Le Sueur, recognized as one of the most conscious and energetic Comtians of his generation in Canada, makes clear that Le Sueur was as committed as

Watson to the idea of a discoverable moral truth about the best way to live, though discoverable through different reasoning processes.

> What a man thinks - if he thinks sincerely - holds good, or should hold good, not for himself alone, but for all men...But as we all err more or less in the conceptions we form, it is manifest that the most satisfactory progress will be made in thought where there is the freest possible social comparison of views, and where men most frequently remind themselves that thought is not destined to some merely individual purposes.13

The moral content of the last part of Le Sueur's statement supports the view that his sharply defined dualism of mind and spirit on the one hand and matter on the other "did not essentially challenge the existence of the spiritual world. It did not doubt the existence of a universal moral order".14

The natural context for such a moral order in the minds of many Canadian publicists at the turn of the century was what one historian has called "the concept of Britannic Idealism".15 In a study that analyzed the representativeness of the ideas of George R. Parkin, a promoter of imperial federation, historian Terry Cook outlined the considerable coincidence between broad idealist views and perceptions of what Canadianism should aspire to be in the period before the Great War. In his description of the evolution of idealism in the English-speaking world in the second half of the nineteenth century he drew attention to the way in which Coleridge, Carlyle, Arnold and Morris all represented this particular strain of conservatism in the Victorian era. At this distance from the technical language of philosophy idealism became a set of ideas about how best to live in light of the view of man "as an embodiment of spirit and ideals, not as a creature of blind instincts and base sensations".16 It assumed that the most genuine form of human development was the pursuit of perfect knowledge and therefore realization of absolute good. The individual must bend his activities to the upholding and forwarding of the spiritual tendencies of "the organic collectivity to which all people belonged by virtue of the spiritual unity of the universe".17 The collectivity to which Parkin felt drawn was a concept of the moral character and mission of the English-speaking people expressed through their empire.

The ideology of empire among English-speaking peoples had been gathering strength and self-consciousness since mid-century. In his extended study of British imperialism James Morris noted how, by 1870, John Ruskin, combining the roles of art historian and social critic in a manner that captured the absolute essence of the idealist outlook, could address the undergraduates of Oxford in terms of imperial mission.

> There is a destiny now possible to us, the highest ever set before a nation to be accepted or refused...Will you youths of England make your country again a royal throne of Kings, a sceptred isle, for all the world a source of light, a center of peace; mistress of learning and of the Arts, faithful guardian of time-honored principles.18

These words exactly captured the idealist sentiments that Terry Cook saw as attracting Canadians like George Parkin.

> Inspiration for Parkin...was ultimately not so much a political programme as it was a way of thinking and living. The Empire was really a state of mind, an ethical concept...He was confident that Anglo-Saxon civilization more than any other reflected the transcendent and

organic standards of the Idealist creed which he held so dearly.19

Such a description of Parkin's world-outlook echoes the thesis in Carl Berger's 1970 study of the co-mingled nature of Canadian ideas of nationalism and imperialism in the half-century after Confederation.20 The overlap between idealist philosophy and imperial sentiment suggests that the later weakening of the influence of that philosophy was to some degree a reflection of the accelerated discrediting of the notion of imperialism in the interwar period.

In his illuminating study of the Canadian academic community in the period falling before and after the Great War S. E. D. Shortt viewed philosophic idealism as coming also under increasing challenge from empiricism in the interwar period.21 Empiricists such as Adam Shortt and James Mavor regarded metaphysical speculation as of little value as a methodology for tackling specific social issues. Yet Shortt emphasized the dominance of the idealist outlook among Canadian academics in the period up until World War I so that even in decline it might be expected to command a large area of mental habits.

Shortt's study of the influence of philosophic idealism in Canada's anglophone intellectual community between 1890 and 1930 was based on an analysis of the ideas of four Canadian academics: Andrew Macphail, professor of the history of medicine at McGill, Archibald MacMechan, professor of English at Dalhousie, James Cappon, professor of English at Queen's and Maurice Hutton, professor of classics at Toronto. Andrew Macphail was no supporter of the levelling notions of democracy. His was a hierarchical view of the distribution of political power where the "well born" and "well bred" guided the lower ranks of society in their natural duties and therefore "genuine freedom".22 It is not surprising then that his view of Canada's proper course was that it should maintain so far as possible these conditions and restrictions about the operation of democracy, compared with the faults of American democracy resulting from the "deterioration of the Anglo Saxon race through 'inferior' immigrants, urban political corruption, and a materialistic creed...".23

A similar perception of threat to "ideal values" caused Archibald MacMechan to view the university as a place of "absolutely pure moral atmosphere" where the leaders of the nation were trained.24 The best medium for this moral education, he believed, in a reflection of the view of Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin, was the study of English literature as the moral expression of the nation's rightful leader, the poet.25 The aesthetic and moral, taste and judgement, should remain essentially joined as they had been at a stage of social culture MacMechan thought to be just passing. The terms in which he described this view reveal significant changes in the perception of the nature of what constituted the "public" whose general views on taste and morality would determine the major values of society. The "public" opinion of the early part of the nineteenth century had reflected a coincidence of values between people and major writers, novelist and poets, that ended with the twentieth century.

> In an age when authors from Scott to Tennyson were objects of popular acclaim, he wrote, "men and women were sensitive to beauty in all its forms, possessed broad culture and thorough refinement, lived on moral uplands and envisaged with earnestness the tremendous riddles of life and destiny. But with the passing of Carlyle, Ruskin and Tennyson the world became a darker place; the twentieth century, devoid of literary leadership, lacked all the virtues absorbed from fine literature."26

Within this nostalgia by a person attached to a particular form of literary values is a view of how strong was the bond between a public and their writers when the writers seem to give legitimacy to the idealist values that were part of that public's world view. Would the heirs to such a public feel a sense of betrayal if the writers and social commentators to whom they were accustomed to look for an amplified and elevated echo of the values they lived by, were instead to be the spokesmen of other values? Or is there a reaction by MacMechan against the emergence of a new public, no longer mute but articulate with different values than those favoured by MacMechan? Certainly he believed that although all were born equal in the sense of a basic orientation to the ideal as the root of conscience that society's leaders should continue to be those individuals who "managed through life to retain this idealism and its concomitant insight into the universal order".27 His own fictional writing, according to Shortt, reflected just the kind of triumph of moral individual over evil tendencies in self and surroundings than one might expect from such a view of human excellence.28

James Cappon's assumptions parallel those ideas. He believed both that all men shared a basic and common nature through the designed capacity of the human mind and imagination to find correspondence and reinforcement for its moral beliefs in the nature of human and physical history and that this in turn required a special leadership role for those most able to articulate and maintain the cultural characteristics and standards of the society.29 Shortt saw this as part of Cappon's support for Hegel's theory of historical evolution. Through such individuals the state would be able to carry out the function ascribed to it in Hegel's theory of the advance of idealism through history. This required that the state embody "a cultural end which expresses traditions, the instincts, and characteristics of the people".30 Such a view would regard the most important of the state's agencies as those that promoted the traditional set of ethical and artistic standards, and the most genuine route to intellectual and aesthetic growth as through a firm grasp of the content and the forms of the cultural tradition.

The most characteristic quality of mind in the group of Canadian idealists reviewed here was the certainty that there was a validity to the moral content, aesthetic forms and political assumptions of their generation that represented a correspondence to the immanent purpose of universal life. For Maurice Hutton the main aim of education was the cultivation of "character", a term whose content related more to manners and morals than the training of the intellect.31 The intellectual content of his educational recommendations rested upon the need for both rationalism and revelation, both classical studies and Christian faith, in order to produce "true" beliefs.32 Thus he left somewhat unclear the question of whether he relied most upon the rationalism of the Greeks, the aesthetic forms of the classical tradition or the declarations of Christianity as the best source for man faced with the continuous struggle to both restrain and realize his most genuine nature.33 Those who achieved this fine balance would as a consequence have acquired character. Such men and women would form the proper and natural aristocracy for a democracy which in turn was viewed not as an end in itself but as a means for eliciting and discovering such an aristocracy. This was Hutton's ideal society.

> It was organically united by a morality based on Christian ethics and on Athenian-like respect for individual freedom. Leaders, though freely chosen in a democratic fashion, were expected to be the nation's best men in terms of "character"...To help the general populace understand the wisdom of this type of social and political organization, education was designed to inculcate Christian morality as well as a sense of duty and self-discipline.34

In Shortt's view this particular social vision reflected "an idealized version of the mid-nineteenth century England in which Hutton had been educated" and carried with it strong ethnocentric and racialist views on the relationship between British and Canadian ways.35

Shortt believed that the frame of mind represented by Macphail, MacMechan, Cappon, and Hutton declined rapidly in importance after World War I.

> The older men, in effect, abdicated from Canadian academic journals, leaving an intellectual vacuum which younger thinkers rapidly filled with their own very different ideas. When the older group of intellectuals wrote at all, their articles tended to be somewhat melancholy reminiscences...As such, they were testimony to the gradual withering of one strain in the history of Canadian thought: nineteenth century idealism.36

The dominance of philosophic idealism in the Canadian academic community was being challenged by empiricists who, over time, were to demonstrate that empiricism was often able to generate specific programs for social conditions and in the process of devising such problem-specific proposals implied how very limited man's established knowledge really was. This was in sharp contrast to Caird's and Watson's affirmation that the existence of Absolute Mind permits men to know all things through the affinity of their own reason with the Absolute. The paradigmic shift within Watson's own professional field of philosophy in Canada was well expressed by T. A. Goudge in his centennial essay reviewing activity in that area of Canadian academic life.

> In his day he (John Watson) was a philosopher of considerable consequence. Moreover, the rather loose arguments that he uses would have been accepted without question by the majority of his fellow idealists. The fact that these arguments do not pass muster now, shows that standards of philosophizing in Canada are more exacting now than they were a century ago ...System-building has been replaced by the examination of specific problems, speculation by piecemeal analysis and description, high abstractness by particularity and concreteness of formulation.37

In the wider area of commentary on public policies the empiricists, Shortt believed, avoided sweeping statements and showed a preference for analyzing the technical aspects of specific problems. Yet this concentration on methodology left a vacuum of over-arching metaphysics within which broad idealist notions persisted with surprising strength.

The shift in the nature of the idealist element in statements about public policy can be illustrated by a comparison between the frame of mind illustrated in the immediate postwar writings of a prominent Canadian publicist of idealism, Sir Robert Falconer, and the outlook represented in the cadre of professional administrators in Canadian public life whose numbers began to increase in the interwar period. This shift may turn out to reflect a particular pattern; the displacement of idealism by pragmatism in the design of specific programs on the one hand and persistence of an underlying support for an idealist point of view which offered reassurance that certain assumptions of the nature and source of ideas about the best way to live had a validity that should be supported by the major institutional arrangements of society, including education.

Sir Robert Falconer, president of the University of Toronto for twenty-five years from 1907 to 1932, was one of the best known Canadian academics of his generation. Trained in England, Scotland and Germany as a classicist, philosopher and theologian he was greatly sought after as a public speaker. In 1920 a collection of his wartime addresses, published under the general title of Idealism in National Character, set out the major themes of the value of and most appropriate sources for sustaining an idealist cast of mind in Canada.38

In the first of these essays, "Education of National Character", Falconer described his view of the nature of the State and its role in maintaining a high moral tone in society. The question he set out to answer was, "How are nations educated into standards of virtue which give us our individuality?" Such a framing of the questions implied combining the notions of universal forms of virtuous behavior with specific cultural patterns or traditions. Such an implication was reflected in the first factor that Falconer pointed to, the gradual growth and expansion of ideas of virtue through social patterns and established institutions until "they become the heritage of a people who almost by intuition display those virtues which they have made their own".39

The prior assumption to that statement represented to Falconer the core belief of idealism, the belief that the ultimate organizing and thus interpretive principles for human life were moral forces.

> Idealism is the belief that moral forces are finally dominant; that law...is the antecedent condition of life on which society, domestic national or international must rest...the permanent moral relationship which hold mankind together. Recognition of Law, and the endeavor to order one's own life and that of society and the State in accordance with it, is Righteousness.40

Falconer's description of the teaching needed to achieve this end viewed it as a search for underlying principles and order whose results would be seen not only in the cognitive but also the affective domain through a measure of self-control. The curriculum content which Falconer thought most appropriate for shaping national character in this way relied less on natural law than the perceived lessons of national literature, history and political institutions. This was accompanied by concerns over and conditions placed on ethnic homogeneity and stability, a view which in turn caused him to emphasize the role of the school in assimilating newcomers into "the ascertained body of moral truth and of the spiritual traditions of our people".41

In an essay called "War and Intellectual Development" Falconer confronted the sense of how the Great War represented a psychological watershed. He continued to believe that the ideals and hopes of the old age remained meaningful for the postwar generation. For him the freedom that the war effort secured still ought to be consciously realized ~~only with~~in limits of particular beliefs about the nature and destiny of man.48

One of the major sources of such beliefs ~~would con~~tinue to be Christianity, understanding by that a climate of Christian beliefs not literalist but "well-informed" by the Higher Criticism that in turn reflected traditions of setting Christianity within Hellenism, both as literature and philosophy.43 The essay incorporating this view, "The Claim of the Bible upon the Educated Reader" strikingly brings together the notions of the State, idealism, Christianity, and established styles of learnedness in a way that demonstrated a distinct idea of how the moral education of society should be managed.

> If, as we believe, the State has a moral purpose, that purpose will become at once surer and clearer if there is a large class of enlightened religious men and women who are able to distinguish what is genuinely Christian from what is only in appearance. Public opinion should be created not by the multitude but by the intelligent.44

It is almost precisely this theme, though realized in a form that undercut Falconer's assumptions, which can be illustrated from some recent studies in the role of intellectuals within the official bureaucracies of the state between the wars. The important differences arose from ascription of the concept of "expert" to the broader concept of "the intelligent". With such a change came a focus on technique, on the empirical and pragmatic, that would seem to inevitably discredit sweeping assumptions of idealism. What is striking is that this did not occur in the final manner that might have been expected.

Professor Douglas Owram's study of this transition in intellectual climate has described how the development of new critical social problems associated with industrialization created a group of intellectuals who believed they had such expertise and wanted to have a role in making social policy. The departure point for this transition was the post-Hegelian idealist thread in Canadian thought at the turn of the century. Such a view of the state as a moral agent, a view encountered in Falconer, led to a different view of the propriety of state action than that which was most characteristic of American culture.

> South of the border, in that "misguided democracy", the question of state action often turned on matters of principle in which liberty, seen as freedom from restraint, was set up as an absolute principle against which other actions must be judged...In Canada, few within the intellectual community...defended the concept of liberty in the American sense. Individual liberty was not so much an absolute principle as it was a means to more social ends.45

The acceleration of industry and business in Canada in the two decades before World War I acted upon this existing difference in cultural outlooks. The traditional view of the role of the intellectual as protector of society's higher values presumed a relatively stable society in which church and school would plan a key role.[46] This came under pressure from economic growth and material prosperity which seemed to be producing a new type of economic man. Academic leaders such as Canon H. J. Cody, future president of the University of Toronto, O. C. S. Wallace, Chancellor of McMaster College, expressed concern along with Stephen Leacock, who published Arcadian Adventures of the Idle Rich in 1914. Such writings as these were distrustful of both the new business and worker classes of the mass urban democracy that was being evolved because they viewed both the capitalism of the one and the socialism of the other as undermining the idea of a hierarchic community which was yet organically united through shared values and perceptions.[47]

The challenge that faced the traditional intellectual leaders of society was the pressure to find a philosophic approach; one that would provide a universal framework for the range of problem-specific programs needed to deal with the variety of pressing social issues of industrialism while preserving the key assumptions of idealism that there was one best way to live based upon a particular moral outlook associated with a particular pattern of cultural and religious development. The restatement of moral values by themselves in church, school and university began to appear insufficient as a means of dealing with social problems; the role and power of the state received more attention as "perhaps...the only agency powerful enough to deal with the major issues that confronted society.[48]

Nothing forced Canadian intellectuals to more searchingly analyze the relation between the individual and the state than the Great War. John Watson, the dean of Canadian philosophic idealism, approached the issue in his study of The State in Peace and War (1919). Doug Owram's description of Watson's argument emphasized the linkage made between the fulfillment of the individual through the well-being of society and the realization of the common will through the moral action of the government.

> Watson was obviously uncomfortable with those who emphasized force and power as the basic relation between the state and its citizenry...Rather, the justification for the assumption of power by the state lay in its very morality, in its ability to secure for man the social animal the best life possible. That "best life", however, was not to be interpreted as meaning merely personal pleasure.49

The consequent dilemma for Watson was to envisage a set of arrangements for determining this Rousseau like concept of a highest moral will that would and, more critically, should apply to all in general while avoiding the qualities of raw compulsion that clearly could be associated with such an idea. This was what caused Watson to emphasize the role of Church and school in creating the proper set of sentiments and beliefs that would ensure a congruence between the morality of the state and the morality of the community. Both those who acted as agents of the state and those who conducted the agencies of the community had to share the same philosophic base.

The Great War formed one of the great challenges to this idealist consensus. If it was true that the state justified its authority over the citizens as a means of elevating society to a higher good, then the increasingly open brutality of the war put such an outcome more and more in question. Yet Owram pointed to evidence of the persistence of an idealist outlook in the writing of prominent Canadian publicists, including Stephen Leacock and Mackenzie King, in the immediate postwar years.

> Though written from quite different points on the political spectrum, the various works are linked by three common themes. First, they all envisage reform in terms of a spiritual renewal of the Canadian people to seek the higher good. Second, [the] sense of spiritual renewal is portrayed in terms of an organic conception of society...Finally, and connected to the spiritual renewal of society and its organic nature, all three reject, at least in theory, the older individualism that was already being mythified as the prominent feature of pre-war life in Canada.50

The timing and the nature of the transition to an industrial society in Canada, therefore, produced a mingling of ideologies where the categories of state intervention versus laissez-faire liberalism, already simplistic enough when applied to Britain and the United States, were combined with the third influence of the dominant idealist philosophy in late nineteenth century Canada.51

The increasing complexity of an industrial economy was to cause a movement away from traditional laissez-faire liberalism. On the other hand, the war had raised serious questions about the Hegelian aspect of idealism that had placed unqualified faith in the moral reasoning of the state. This in turn encouraged or permitted the replacement of the old mental habit of trying to found social policy on formal philosophic precepts with an outlook that valued the shorter range and more focussed mental qualities of technique and management. This was the shift in thinking which acted as the intellectual culture for those inter-war intellectuals in Canada who were increasingly engaged by government. Nonetheless, in Owram's view, both the pace and the completeness of this change in intellectual climates can be over-emphasized.

> The idealist influence, and the religious elements that went with it in Canada, did not disappear overnight - or between generations. It is just that it is fragmented after the First War and ceased as a formal system to dominate Canadian writings on the state. It remained, however, as a strong current, implicit rather than explicit, shaping the thinking of the generation of the 1930s and 1940s...It may be possible, by the end of the Second War, to talk in terms of...the destruction of the idealist impulse in Canadian life. Even as late as 1945, however, eddies and pools of the once all-powerful philosophical current were still visible.52

This general assessment reflected Owram's thesis that in the interwar period there developed, out of the expansion of Canadian public and academic life, "an identifiable and influential elite" which exerted an important influence within and between both of these areas of national life in the interwar period and into the Second War and which continued to be heavily influenced by the earlier intellectual and religious, indeed idealist, assumptions in which they themselves had been raised.

The next part of this study will consider whether the extent and the character of serious conservative commentary in North America in the period of So Little For the Mind deserves to be rated only as an "eddy". Certainly this seems not to be implied in the general assessments of the distinctive character of Canadian culture by A. B. McKillop, already referred to for his studies in idealism in Canada, and the prominent Canadian writer and literary critic, Hugh Hood. Both of these observers believed that there persisted a quality of moral conservatism that has marked Canadian thought and values. In a centennial essay, Hood asserted that the American dream "was the invention of the poetic imagination" and "the heroic will to power...as the expression of an idea of absolute liberty" that differed from "real integrity of conscience" in public life in Canada which arose in turn out of an abiding consciousness of the fragility of the community of communities that had been created and must always be maintained.

> ...the Canadian has a social and cultural opportunity without parallel in modern life. He can create the first modern state, the country of the moral imagination, where what happened from 1775 to 1917, and everything that went before, are united, where compromise and squareness, far from being dirty words, are recognized for what they are, the vital and necessary complement of commitment...53

Here was an intuited distinction in ethos between the two North American experiments. Twelve years later A. B. McKillop made an explicit connection between that statement and the persistence of the tradition of philosophic idealism in Canada.

McKillop viewed idealism as the Canadian response to national circumstances equivalent to the pragmatist movement in the United States.54 In his preface to that study he had explicitly made an association between the roots of modern conservative thought in Edmund Burke and the tension that he felt to be at the basis of "the moral imperative" of Anglo-Canadian life, the tension between the active critical role of the free-ranging intellect and the importance of maintaining intellectual control and conviction. He believed that it was possible to create a geneology of this moral imperative in Canadian intellectual life; a line of connected concerns from John Watson, through Andrew Macphail, Stephen Leacock, Robert Falconer and on into the post war world with the Massey Commission, and writers such as Hugh Hood, George Grant and Northrop Frye.

> The moral imperative is doubtless a universal aspect of the human condition, for all men draw lessons from experience. What is most distinctive about this phenomenon in Anglo-Canadian thought is that despite its inevitable twists and turns, its different intellectual shapes and emotional shadings, the basic lesson has nevertheless remained constant from generation to generation, and it has also been given a sustained voice. The Anglo-Canadian intellectual elite, whether living in a God-centered British province or in a state-centered North American nation, has consistently urged that it is necessary to reach a modus vivendi between intellectual inquiry and conventional wisdom....55

Preoccupation with a balance between intellectual inquiry and maintaining the cultural primacy of a particular set of definitions about how best to live was exactly the idea at the center of Hilda Neatby's writings on education. Hilda Neatby remained very conscious in her public statement of education of calling for the maintenance at least, and rescue if need be, of that context of philosophic idealism which combined transcendental with rational authority for abiding values and models. Recognition of this public identity helps explain the presence of an article by her in the inaugural issue of the Canadian Journal of Theology in 1955 in which she made this association explicit.

> ...tens of thousands of young teachers knowing no philosophy of any kind have been introduced to an educational philosophy based on the assumption that belief in God is not only irrelevant but harmful to the educational process. In one large Canadian training school...students used...a text in which "idealism" (a philosophy of education which allows belief in God) is given relatively little attention...56

Three years later, in another public lecture on the intellectual roots of philosophies of education, Hilda Neatby reviewed those intellectual movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that had seemed not only to force a separation in the idealist conjunction of faith and reason, but even to make reason itself seem shallow. She recognized the challenge and the intellectual dilemma, but equally insisted that one must live as if the basic articles of idealism remained true.

> One may say that moral laws are relative, and that moral conduct must be judged relative to a given situation, without saying that there are no absolutes of truth or of goodness. And one may admit profound emotional drives and urges deeper than reason, without denying the supreme value and power of human reason; and without any right to deny the possible existence of a spiritual nature a spiritual destiny and a spiritual power which transcend all our science.57

This chapter has been concerned to establish the importance of a particular form of cultural conservatism in Canada, philosophic idealism, in the first quarter of the twentieth century and the continuing, though diminishing, influence of these ideas upon important groups in the intellectual life of Canada up to and through the Second World War, and the relationship of these ideas to the concerns raised by Hilda Neatby. The chapter to follow will examine the continuing presence of such ideas of cultural conservatism in the private and professional circles to which Hilda Neatby belonged in the interwar years and in the decade following the end of World War II, the decade in which So Little For the Mind was written.

NOTES

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CHAPTER VI

The analysis of the evolution of philosophic idealism in Canada described an intellectual tradition whose major elements so closely paralleled many of Hilda Neatby's views as to suggest a genuine national lineage of ideas. Ideas must be maintained by particular groups and individuals, however. An examination of the nature of Canada's intellectual community in the interwar and immediate postwar years, along with a description of the major values and attitudes of Hilda Neatby's personal and professional associates, will throw additional light on that linkage.

When the collaborative authors of the most recent scholarly general history of postwar Canada applied their self-consciously brisk and unsentimental analysis of national trends to conservative ideas of culture they concluded that unreality appeared to be one of the main qualities of such critiques. In Canada Since 1945 (1981) Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English emphasized the sparseness of institutions of art, music and learning across the dominion in the years immediately following the Second World War. They contrasted the strengthening links to the popular electronic culture of the United States with the small number of orchestras and galleries in Canada. Not even the CBC was a sufficient counteracting influence in the 1940s.

> Commercial radio was as blatantly commercial as commercial television was later to become. In popular music...Americanization was all but complete. The CBC had not yet abandoned the battle for standards and sense, but its impact was probably small, except when it

> was participating in the diffusion of mass culture...As for high culture and the arts, Canada had precious little of either.1

One of the major related patterns of Canadian life that lay behind this situation was the relatively small percentage of university educated citizens. In the quarter-century since 1920 the annual number of undergraduates had risen by less than fourteen thousand. This number was to double in the second half of the 1940s but the academic elite in the country remained extremely small at the time of the publication of So Little for the Mind.2 This very circumstance, however, may turn out to provide a unique opportunity for identifying as many as possible of the likely sources of the educational views expressed by Hilda Neatby. A corollary of that circumstance provides the starting point: the implications of the likely cohesiveness of such a small group for the creation of an informal network of decision-makers that knew each other and shared a common cultural literacy whose language carried heavy assumptions about the most desirable form of civil society and the kind of public education that would sustain and forward that concept.

The existence of such an informal network was one of the basic assumptions underlying Doug Owram's 1986 study of the role of Canadian intellectuals in government in the second quarter of this century. He was particularly careful to avoid seeming to refer to some strictly limited cabal but instead to a larger "network of individuals of intellectual outlook, bound together by a number of professional ties, professional relationships, and similar attitudes".3

Among the shared characteristics of this group a university education was the most common, along with a continuing active association between public and academic life involving career movement in both directions at high levels.4 In a stage of the development of higher education in Canada before extensive measures to assist undergraduates most of this university class came from families of some substance who represented the university educated in the preceding generation. The intellectual inheritance was strongly flavored by religion, not necessarily of a doctrinal sort but imparting a tone of moral seriousness, a kind of "natural Protestantism" to use a phrase that Owram borrowed from Arthur Lower.5 This seriousness often reflected a conscious awareness of the Great War and its impact upon a generation, although the message left behind seemed an uncertain mixture of respect and skepticism toward the value of the sacrifice represented in that experience.6 Finally, there remained a strong sense of the prewar tradition that higher education carried natural obligations of leadership, reflecting a broader concept of democracy as a system that was more virtuous in the selection of elites, not their discontinuance.

Owram hypothesized that the shared attitudes of this elite were often a reflection of common academic experiences during post graduate work at a small number of universities in the United States and England, particularly Chicago, Oxford, and Harvard.7 The ties thus created received longterm institutional support through association in scholarly societies connected to such studies. Owram placed particular stress on the connections between academic and public life that arose among the members of the Canadian Political Science Association and the Canadian Historical Association. This supports the view presented in the 1973 presidential address to the Canadian Historical Association by Lewis G. Thomas in which he described the rather intimate nature of the intellectual community that supplied some of the key ideas in cultural policy in Canada between the wars.

> ...it seems to have been a very tight and cosy society, a society where everyone knew each other. Though they did not necessarily like one another they knew how each fitted into the structure, the peculiar interests that each had and to whom to go when something had to be done. Ottawa was a small city, Canada was a country with a small population. The number of people of sufficient means, education and position to give leadership was exceedingly limited and communication between them was, because they could know each other so well, very easy. The ramifications of this society extended into every Canadian city of any size, and a net of relationships existed, based on family ties, school and university friendships and a community of manners and interests.8

Taken together these observations by Doug Owram and Lewis G. Thomas suggest that the relationship of these intellectual associations to the views Hilda Neatby presented in So Little for the Mind deserves attention on at least two levels: first the ideas of the individuals in that group with whom Hilda Neatby most regularly associated and second the view of the distinctive nature of Canada as a North American nation in the general historical works of the major historians of that generation.

Hilda Neatby can be put within the context of a circle of friends that included fellow historians Lewis G. Thomas himself, William

Morton, Lewis H. Thomas and Margaret Ormsby.9 All were conscious of being raised in the British tradition. William Morton's family were prominent citizens and dedicated Anglicans in small town Manitoba. Margaret Ormsby had grown up in British Columbia where the English were the dominant group in the interior. Lewis G. Thomas was born into the community of well-educated, anglophile immigrants who helped to establish the ranching industry in southern Alberta at the turn of the century. Hilda Neatby, however, might have been expected to be even more conscious of both her English background and of how North American life surrounded that cultural pattern with countervailing values. The circumstances of her childhood underlined the strenuousness required to maintain and transmit that tradition.

Hilda Neatby's brother, Leslie, in his memoir of the family's early years, has left ample evidence of the stresses to be borne by a highly literate English family that had set itself down among the homesteading community of Watrous, Saskatchewan, in the years before World War I. Leslie Neatby wrote of how every member of the family found themselves "in an unnatural position" due largely to their father's failure in both his homesteading and his medical practice. Neglecting "getting ahead" in favour of the solaces of his library Hilda Neatby's father was regarded as an oddity by most of his neighbors.10 What Andrew Neatby did convey to his children successfully, through his evening readings to his children, was an informed love of English literature.

> He read the serious and the dramatic with effortless fitness of emphasis and enunciation, and varied the novels with Scott's narrative poems and extracts from that picturesque historian, Lord Macauley. Whatever he touched he adorned, fulfilling the requirement of the Roman schoolmaster by making it impossible for the dullest of his listeners not to understand and enjoy. The sustenance which he had failed to give us we were able to provide for ourselves; the enlargement of mind which he did give us we could have found nowhere else in the same richness and fullness.11

Such an upbringing made Hilda Neatby, in a phrase of L. G. Thomas's, "culturally critical", making her very conscious and knowledgeable of what she wanted to preserve and consequently quick to condemn a view of Canadian culture that was prepared to relax the effort required to maintain the links with that cultural tradition.

Hilda Neatby found such views supported by her friends and colleagues within the Canadian academic community. This circle of like-minded people was just that. It was not a self-conscious group which planned ways of promoting a particular outlook. It was simply the case that they shared some important assumptions about what democracy meant and the implications for the role of education and schooling in society.12 There appeared to be an important theological strand to these views, a Christian belief in the essential equality of all humans, allied to a reservation about the egalitarian element in democracy arising from a self-perception that by dint of native wit and cultural background they had qualified for membership in society's influential minority. Democracy certainly meant the rule of the majority but guidance of the views of the majority should be left in the hands of "right thinking people". This produced a hierarchical concept of natural leadership in a democracy based on ability, effort, character and upbringing which in turn was derived from traditional models in the United Kingdom and eastern Canada. Giving force to this view was the sentiment that such a version of democracy needed to be "conserved" in the face of the political and cultural tendencies toward mass democracy as practiced in the United States. There was a sense of structured, hierarchical society where it was assumed that the more advantaged elements such as university teachers would automatically assume positions of influence. Lewis G. Thomas specifically placed Hilda Neatby and her circle within this context.

> Professors and academics were a relatively more powerful element in the influential minority than they are now and they were fortified in the case of my generation by having other claims to be part of the influential minority. They were educated, obviously, but also by and large middle class. For example L. H. Thomas was the son of a minister and Hilda Neatby came from an educated middle-class English family - lower-middle class perhaps, but by Canadian, by western Canadian standards the Neatbys fitted neatly into the influential minority.[13]

He saw this group as self-consciously maintaining a set of cultural values that seemed inseparable from qualities of taste and discrimination based upon a stock of knowledge that placed demands upon and provided open recognition for things of the mind. His recollection of the state of mind of people like himself and Hilda Neatby in the fifties was a sense of being "overwhelmed by a homogenizing process that was reducing everybody to similarity and pushing down things of the mind rather that raising the ability of people to appreciate things of the mind".14 This was the conservative tradition with which Hilda Neatby and her circle identified.

To talk of an outlook that was shared by many within a group is by no means to claim that such a view was unanimous, let alone uniform. Carl Berger's 1976 study of the underlying concerns and assumptions of English Canadian historians in the first half of this century certainly demonstrates a wide range of focus and ideology in the works of major writers.15 Nonetheless the following propositions which were widely supported parallel the kind of issues noted earlier; belief in the special role of academics and of an intellectual elite to provide direction in taste and ideals to society in general, concern ranging to bitterness toward the mass society of the postwar period viewed as crass and too influenced by the United States, and a sense of alarm that the concept of liberal individual values within the intellectual traditions of Western and European culture was being eroded. Among the major historians of the second quarter of the twentieth century Frank Underhill, Donald Creighton, William Morton can be particularly associated with that set of concerns and specifically associated with the intellectual development of Hilda Neatby.

Frank Underhill was an instructor at the University of Saskatchewan during Hilda Neatby's undergraduate years, 1920-24, and had the greatest impact on her of all her professors.16 Carl Berger described Underhill as sharing the view that democracy required a preparedness to be guided by those who functioned as the voices of public opinion. He felt drawn to the social function and status of those like Carlyle and Arnold, "the great protestors and moral critics of the nineteenth century who supposedly had functioned as general philosophers to the community".17 Underhill did not regard the flaws of mass culture as a flaw of American society only but as a part of modern democracy in general, including political events in Canada in the 1950s.

> The emergence of the Social Credit movement and the Diefenbaker Conservative movement with their appeal to the little men in the towns and on the farms, to the more uneducated and backward sections, of the population, with their suspicion of Civil Service experts and central bankers, with their fundamentalist anti-intellectualism in both religion and politics - all this shows how far we have gone in the direction of a simple-minded populist democracy.18

Arthur Lower was expressing somewhat similar concerns in the fifties about what he called "Canadian mass man". In This Most Famous Stream (1954) and Canadians in the Making (1958) he described the intellectual, including religious, roots and historical experience that must be consciously learned and appreciated in order to sustain a set of values necessary for a liberal democracy that threatened to be overwhelmed by the "common" in the sense of both conformity and vulgarity.

> There are times when every people serve false gods. Equality, a god with aspect of beneficence, could easily become one of them, for if the supporting intellectual and philosophic elements are taken from his worship, the slope goes quickly down to that bog which might be called "simpleton democracy" ...At mid-century the bog had not yet been reached but only self-conscious and effective inquiry into the deeper aspects of our religion of Equality would save us from it. Our people would have to

> learn to tolerate men, who were not afraid, for the sake of equality, of being "unequal"...19

Donald Creighton's interpretations of the changing nature of Canada reflected these same concerns in a particularly poignant and ironic manner. The theme of The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence (1937) was that the commercial business ethos of the merchants of central Canada had played a critical role in the establishment of that other North American society than the United States. As the years passed, after 1945, however, these same drives and forces seemed to be altering the cast of Canada away from any transmitted transcendentalist and hierarchic values towards the utilitarianism and levelling down of America. The mood of his ideas in the fifties may be estimated from the gloominess of his forecast a decade later in Canada's First Century (1970) as noted by Carl Berger.

> What was so striking about Canada's First Century was the extent to which Creighton's pessimism rested on a moral revulsion against the long range effects of those commercial and business drives that he had once associated with the origins of the nation....Creighton identified this heresy of progress with the United States. "The Americans have escaped completely, or almost completely, from the mythical and religious explanations for existence which consoled the ancient and medieval world of Europe. They have come to believe...that progress is the only good in life, and that progress means the liberation of man through the progressive conquest of nature by technology".20

Both in ideas and tone such statements were parallel to the themes advanced by other members in what Berger described as "a small group of people who shared anxieties about certain features of Canadian politics". It included two other historians who were personal friends of Hilda Neatby, William Morton of the University of Manitoba and Roger Graham of the University of Saskatchewan, along with George Grant who was related through marriage to Vincent Massey whose circle Hilda Neatby entered after 1948. Roger Graham expressed his support for the conservative roots of Canadian values tangentially through a three-volume study of Arthur Meighen, but both George Grant and William Morton were open publicists for a conservative tradition of ideas and values that they believed must be retained if Canada was to survive as the other North American society.

The Canadian Encyclopedia described George Grant as a "'brooding' philosopher of apparently implacable pessimism" and "one of the most influential thinkers of his era".21 His best known work, Lament for a Nation (1965), was among the most articulate and deeply felt reactions to the apparent defeat of the conservative political revival under Diefenbaker. What gave the book its poignancy was an analysis that not only found modern liberalism to be spiritually inadequate but discovered modern Canadian conservatism, at least in its political form, to be based on conflicting drives and interests. The acquisitive and exploitative motives were in process of pushing aside insights into the limited nature of human wisdom and the consequent need for containing behavior within traditions, rules and principles transmitted down the generations. The tragedy of Diefenbaker's victory in 1957, according to George Grant, was that he mistook his campaign rhetoric based on the older values as the appropriate context within which to create the policies for a government whose most powerful members were oriented to economic growth based on a continental and technological outlook. When Grant appended an introduction to a new edition of the original text in 1970 he traced the inner contradiction of values to their common source in the intellectual roots of British liberalism.

> The ambiguity of the English-speaking Canadian tradition...lay in the belief that on the northern half of this continent we could build a community which had a stronger sense of the common good and of public order than was possible under the individualism of the American dream. The original sources of that hope...lay in certain British traditions which had been denied in the American revolution. But the American liberalism which we had to oppose, itself came out of the British tradition...22

By the time he wrote Technology and Empire (1962) Grant had come to the stern conclusion that the competition between these sets of values was over and that the traditional form of conservative values represented an anachronism. He described the Canadian dilemma that had been present from our beginning as the competition between a consciously different cultural tradition and the common appetites created by the possibilities of the natural resources of North America. Canadians such as himself "have despised and feared the American for the account of freedom in which their independence was expressed...but we are still enfolded with the Americans in the deep sharing of having crossed the ocean and conquered the new land".23 When this dialectic worked itself out in his own generation George Grant expressed intensely the intellectual dilemma of responding to the "barrenness" of modern liberal society with an impulse to conserve "wonderful truths from our origins in Athens and Jerusalem" and then being overwhelmed in turn by the belief that to "partake even dimly in the riches of Athens and Jerusalem should be to know that one is outside the public realm of the age of progress".24 And yet the impulse survived in some form in his writings because the whole message of his writings was the spiritual insufficiency of the utilitarian and technocratic mentalities, so that the real challenge of the dilemma is to reformulate, in some way as yet unknown, the consolations and the priorities of the hard won wisdoms from the past.25

He offered a warning that it would not be sufficient or wise to rely upon the teaching of humanities in the university to take the role which had been played by Calvinist revelation.

> This popular hope could never be realized for the following reason: those who knew the humanities professionally were aware of what was going on in Europe. The best of them knew that social thought was methodologically dominated by "historicism" and "fact-value distinction".26

Yet again Grant could not yield on the need to overcome even this the most profound of all challenges to be overcome by an academic conservatism. He could not bring himself to set aside "the idea of a presence above which potentiality cannot be exalted" or not remain sensitive to the sense of incompleteness or "deprival which might lead us to see the beautiful as the image, in the world, of the good".27

> If I try to put it into words, I would say it was the recognition that I am not my own. In more academic terms, if modern liberalism is the affirmation that our essence is our freedom, then this experience was the

> denial of that definition, before the fact that we are not our own.28

The nature of the literary sources of that conservatism called for by Grant remain elusive in his own writing. This caused at least one critic of the theoretical framework offered in Lament for a Nation to view the systems of ideas that Grant seemed to have in mind as essentially "irrelevant exposures in which the twin experiences of romanticism and nostalgia replace preparation for an encounter with existence".29 The most direct response to that and the clearest parallel to Hilda Neatby's belief in the value of strenuous reflection upon great actions and great ideas appeared, appropriately it may seem, in his 1969 CBC Massey Lectures entitled Time as History in which Grant focussed upon some of the implications of Nietzsche's insistence on the historical dimension of humanness as the sole clue provided man about his nature and potential in view of "the death of God". What Grant did not accept about Nietzsche's position is that human purpose can only be the reflection of human will and can never be the immanence of something more than human, more than time as history alone. There was a rigour to Nietzsche's position that Grant did respond to, however. It was a call to the seriousness of living, a belief that "any appeal to the past must not be made outside a full recognition of the present" and that a study of the past that cut one off from life now was "cowardly, trivializing, and at worst despairing".30

W. L. Morton's writings on the conservative tradition in Canada did not share the jeremiad quality of George Grant's statements yet there was no less conviction that the conservative view of man and how he is to be nurtured was a vital part of the Canadian cultural tradition without which that set of ideas and behaviors would run aside from its main channels into side-currents and shallows, losing energy, direction and identity. William Morton's situation as a westerner gave him a view of conservatism in Canada that paralleled that of Hilda Neatby and helps to explain the closeness of their association. Carl Berger drew attention to how Morton was impressed not by the conflict between land and culture, environment and inheritance but by the degree to which established ways were conveyed to the frontier.

> ...Morton showed a sensitive awareness to the continuity of institutions in newly settled areas. "A great heritage has been brought in and transplanted with singularly little loss," he summarized, "the church sprung from a far distant Palestine, local government going back to Robert Baldwin's Ontario, and the New England townships and beyond the seas to Norman and Saxon times...."31

Morton made explicit his own view of the roots and nature of Canadian conservatism in a speech to a conference of Western Canadian University Conservatives in 1959. He grounded conservatism upon a recognition of the legitimacy of a high authority outside the self that in turn reflected a view of human wisdom and grace as limited. In explaining the sources of Canadian conservatism he referred to a work, Freedom Wears a Crown (1957) by John Farthing, that explicitly placed the political institutions of Britain, especially constitutional monarchy, at the centre of the definition of Canada. He found this thesis to be historically inaccurate though admitting that he was to commit this error himself, because of his own descent and education. Among the additional strains of conservatism that he felt must be recognized in the evolution of Canadian conservatism were the following: the French Catholic tradition, the political values of the American Loyalists who represented a post Jacobean Toryism of a kind reflected in the balanced intentions of the Constitutional Act of 1791, the ongoing evolution of Canadian Toryism toward the concept of responsible government leading in turn to the "Liberal Conservatism" of John A. Macdonald, "a conservatism which through responsible government had come to terms with democracy in Canada, and was prepared to move with the times when the need for change was proven".32

Morton was insistent upon the continuing need for Canadian conservative values in the mid-twentieth century, alluding to the stresses created by "every varying social standard", and "the steady corporatization, if I may coin an ugly word, of our society". The most striking aspect of his argument lay not in these statements, however, but in his claim that only the conservative remained as the custodian of the qualities and virtues of the original stock of genuine liberal individualism.

> ...philosophic individualism, or the extinction of the true liberal...who was... at his best a humanitarian, and a man of generous instincts and magnanimous mind - that kind of liberal is gone with the top hat and the frock coat...and it behoves conservatives to remember that they are in fact his residual legatees, and that the liberal spirit now finds almost its sole dwelling place in conservative minds.33

This was not to be the conservatism of individual acquisitiveness. Morton called "frank and loyal acceptance of the welfare state... (as) not in conflict with Conservative principles, of which laissez-faire and rugged individualism are no part".34 This conservatism was the "conserving" of a set of attitudes and behaviors from the past, something very close to Hilda Neatby's concept of an "educated man", she being specifically named by Morton, along with Russell Kirk and Allan Bestor of the United States, as being in the lead of those "restorers of learning" whose educational arrangements must necessarily eschew the kind of equality that would restrict the "liberty in men to realize what is in them".35.

The views of Vincent Massey on the relationship of schooling to culture and of both to society represented ideas very close to the genesis of So Little For the Mind itself. Massey encouraged Hilda Neatby to undertake the writing of the book as a special separate project and arranged a grant from the Massey Foundation. He commented on each chapter and helped select a publisher when many were afraid of offending their market in provincial departments of education.36 The close intellectual relationship that led to this venture in turn represented the bond that had formed between Vincent Massey and Hilda Neatly in the course of their work together on the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences between 1949-51. According to Massey's official biographer, Claude Bissell, there appeared to be a special empathy of values and ideas between the "lapsed Methodist who still believed in striving for perfection in this life" and "the devout Presbyterian who placed her faith in the elect".37

Bissell stated that Massey had not known Neatby prior to her appointment to the Massey Commission. In favor of her selection was her gender in view of the active role of many women's organization in support of the arts. Additionally she was a westerner, from the Prairies in particular, a region not represented by any other commissioner. Yet one hesitates to endorse Bissell's view that, apart from the academic endorsements she received, she was selected because she was a "typical" westerner.38 Perhaps L. G. Thomas was closer to the mark when he observed that Hilda Neatby may have represented what Massey would have liked to believe typical westerners to be.39 Her selection was not based, at any rate, on a prior awareness of views she had already developed in several educational journals about the interrelationship of culture and society and the particular nature of democratic schooling needed to maintain and transmit the cultural knowledge viewed as most vital by her. What is striking is the parallelism of ideas between the two commissioners generated by the very different material and generational worlds that each had occupied in their youth.

In his autobiography Massey made clear that he had in his early life formed a deep attachment to England and although "we are North Americans in Canada...it is a platitude to say that we are the better Canadians if we remember the legacy of England".40 In one particularly vivid reminiscence he recreated a scene from the weekend house parties of his early manhood that underlined not only the self-conscious modeling of the upper class English social graces but also the assumptions of interest and pleasure in writing and literature.

> Lunch took place on an island or a point some distance away from the house - a delicious cold meal, at which

> everyone was required to choose an implement (never two, still less three), knife or fork or spoon; no more. In addition to the hampers for lunch, there was always a basket for books - the book you happened to be reading, or some spares, and always Blackwood's and The Cornhill.41

One should not be surprised, then, to find a deep agreement on priorities of right living between Vincent Massey and Hilda Neatby, however far the apparent social distance between the literary readings in a Saskatchewan farm house and those where the lawn dipped down to the lake at a country retreat in Ontario.

Vincent Massey regarded the first task of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences as being to clarify the nature of the relationship between culture and national identity by establishing the naturalness and necessity of that relationship.

> "Culture" was a word we tried to avoid, but regrettably, there is no synonym in the English language to employ. Culture in French is a normal term, its meaning perfectly understood; translated into English it produces an uncomfortable self-consciousness. But we had to think of "culture", using the term in the proper sense; we were concerned with what we were doing in Canada to help our nation express itself.42

What should be most appropriately noted in this chapter on personal influences upon the ideas of Hilda Neatby is the mutual reinforcement of views between she and Vincent Massey about the selectivity that might be required to preserve particular forms and standards of literary and creative culture. Bissell believed that the major recommendations of the report had an elitist character that "reflected Massey's convictions and attitudes" but that he had "a strong ally in Hilda Neatby".43

Vincent Massey was almost twenty years older than Hilda Neatby. The bridge of intellectual sympathy between them may have resulted from her interest in the ideas of certain key nineteenth century English writers of the generation before her. Clarence Tracy, a close friend of Hilda Neatby's at the University of Saskatchewan, observed that in the years when the arguments in So Little For the Mind must have been forming that "her mind was deeply influenced by emanations from mid-Victorian Oxford as reflected in the writings of Arnold, Newman, and others".44 This particular English tradition of ideas about the nature of intellectual culture and the kind of educational arrangements that nurtured and promoted it was receiving its most eloquent expression in her own day in the writings of T. S. Eliot. Working backwards through the key ideas of this tradition, noting where possible the hesitancies and the enthusiasms that Hilda Neatby herself expressed for particular propositions by these writers, will help to round out the map of direct and vicarious intellectual influences upon the educational ideas that she expressed in So Little For the Mind.

T. S. Eliot's After Strange Gods, (1934), the Ideas of a Christian Society (1949) and Notes Towards the Definition of Culture (1949) represent an extended personal response to the most fundamental of all conservative anxieties, the belief that the surrounding culture was breaking down, both in the sense of social disintegration and decline of spiritual rigour. To be aware of his sense of some awful deterioration helps us understand the range of tone to be found in

Eliot's statements, a range which echoed that of Matthew Arnold and was re-echoed in many passages of So Little For the Mind. In T. S. Eliot's writings the sharp swings from nostalgia to abrupt anger, even petulance and unfair overstatement, and then back again to a detached stoicism corresponded to his perception of cultural breakdown. They represented the recognizable range of human reactions to any approaching situation which was dreaded and hated, but could not be turned aside. Yet correspondence in tone was accompanied by Hilda Neatby's reservations about Eliot's thesis. She could not bring herself to abandon her concept of the autonomous intellect as the heart of culture in favour of Eliot's perception that culture was inseparable from the ethos of a whole religious or class experience. Eliot had written in this vein in the most sweeping sense in After Strange Gods wherein he had asserted that culture was vitally dependent upon racial homogeneity and continuity.45 In that work and The Idea of a Christian Society Eliot was preoccupied with the need to protect those spiritual values which he believed arose from and were essential to tradition. He believed that the literary works of that tradition reflected a dualistic view of human nature that corresponded to and was best sustained in the Christian conceptions of man. The conscious role of guardian was to be in the hands of the Community of Christians, which would consist of those Christians with marked intellectual and spiritual superiority, and would include "some of those who are ordinarily spoken of, not always with flattering intention, as 'intellectuals'".46

> It will be their identity of belief and aspiration, their background of a common system of education and a common culture, which will enable them to influence and be influenced by each other, and collectively to form the conscious mind and the conscience of the nation.47

It was in his ideas on formation of the intellectual, revealed in Notes on Culture, that Eliot's ideas part company from the elemental equation that Hilda Neatby would make between "a common system of education and a common culture".

In that work Eliot asserted that on the one hand the culture of any "higher" class is not outside the culture of society as a whole, while on the other it was an essential condition for the preservation of this "higher" culture that it should continue to be a minority culture.48 There were two related corollaries that Hilda Neatby's views would not have supported. Eliot was strongly opposed to a common education system for all members of society based on the cultural beliefs and works of the higher culture. He regarded this as the de-culturalization of alternative authentic class cultures. The complement to this view was his assertion that the elite who sustained the minority culture could only do so within the context of class and family, who provided the informal ambience of that minority culture.

> I think that in the past the repository of this culture has been the elite, the major part of which was drawn from the dominant class of the time...The units...will, some of them, be individuals; others will be families. But the individuals from the dominant class who compose the nucleus of the cultural elite must not thereby be cut off from the class to which they belong, for without their membership of that class they would not have their part to play.49

This idea was at the heart of Eliot's ideas on cultural transmission. Minority culture represented not simply artistic productions, but a whole way of life which such institutions as class and families within class alone can support. Hence, although Eliot went on in Notes on Culture to scatter some suggestions about the content of a curriculum that were very similar to general comment made by Hilda Neatby about the Western tradition, his abiding theme that culture and class were the same and that both were prior to education represented something essentially different from Hilda Neatby's wish to see all individual intellects exercised and exalted through common exposure to the highest models of literature and historical example.

Such a view of the nature of culture and the relation of culture to education and then the relation of both of these to society as a whole as Hilda Neatby presented in So Little For the Mind corresponded much more closely to Matthew Arnold's definition of the subject in Culture and Anarchy.

> ...culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits...50

The distinction between Eliot and Arnold's views lie not only in the the more literary conception of culture here but even more critically in the means by which such culture was protected and promoted.

Matthew Arnold was an evangelist spreading knowledge of cultural perfection through all of society by means of schooling. Raymond Williams in Culture and Society (1958) wrote that "others had argued for a new national education, but none with the authority or effect of Arnold".51 Who were to be the general agents of this task of achieving general perfection through the propagation of the knowledge of models of perfection? Unlike T. S. Eliot, Matthew Arnold could find no hereditary class qualified to take on this task. Neither the "Barbarians" nor the "Philistines" as a group had the capacity to purify the impulses of the growing "Populace". What he relied on was a concept of a "remnant"; a group made up from individuals in but not of their class, "aliens" or "outsiders" who "are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general humane spirit, by the love of human perfection".52 Such individuals would not be a class in T. S. Eliot's sense, but instead remained conscious of their individual intellectual pilgrimage and autonomy, a self-perception that was echoed in the particular context of the works of Cardinal Newman from which Hilda Neatby drew the title phrase for So Little For the Mind.

The phrase "so little for the mind" occurs towards the end of Newman's lecture on "Liberal Knowledge Viewed In Relation to Learning", one of the set of lectures given by him on the occasion of the establishment of the Catholic University of Dublin in 1852. In their collected form, On the Scope and Nature of University Education, these lectures set out a view of liberal education and a statement of the value of intellectual activity as an end in itself that has been regarded as definitive so that the historian G. M. Young ranked it with Aristotle's Ethics "among the most valuable of all works on the aim of Education".53 It was appropriate that Hilda Neatby should find his views attractive and his general definition of liberal education a key reference point for her own opinions. Beyond this some possible additional clue to the emotional source of these opinions is provided in the particular context of statements by Newman within which was set the phrase that touched some sense of recognition within her so strongly that she selected it as the title of her work.

> Nay, self-education in any shape, in the most restricted sense, is preferable to a system of teaching which, professing so much, really does so little for the mind. Shut your college gates against the votary of knowledge, throw him back upon the searching and the efforts of his own mind; he will gain by being spared an entrance into your babel.54

What was there in the context of this statement that caused Hilda Neatby to see herself?

The educational view that acted as a foil for this particular statement was Newman's concept of a shallow kind of instruction that issued from a set of teachers with no "mutual sympathies and no intercommunion" responsible to "a set of youths who do not know them, and do not know each other" for "a large number of subjects, different in kind and connected by no wide philosophy".55 He recoiled from such a quality of educational experience and in doing so set down two contrasting models of genuine learning. One, and only one, seems to catch the aspect of the lonely dedication to intellectual activity in itself that had formed and justified so large a part of Hilda Neatby's own life. The first model emphasized the importance of the ethos created in a community of young students, a "self-perpetuating tradition, or a genius loci...which imbues and forms, more or less, and one by one, every individual who is successively brought under its shadow".56 Such an evocation of the "spirit" of the great private schools of England had no parallel in Hilda Neatby's own experience. The second stressed not community but the individual odyssey of the genuine "votary of knowledge", aware of both his singularity and independence, separated from the crowd and certain of his identification with intellect, with all of the shortcomings and strengths that come from such untutored individual dedication to learning. Such individuals would be recognizable by "the breaks, deficiencies, and irregularities of their knowledge", yet these would also represent the abiding standard of genuine devotion to intellectual life.

> They will be too often ignorant of what everyone knows and takes for granted, of that multitude of small truths which fall upon the mind like dust...but, with these and whatever other liabilities upon their heads, they are likely to have more thought, more mind, more philosophy, more true enlargement, then those earnest but ill-used people... [who] when their period of education is passed, throw up all they have learned in disgust...57

The selection by Michael Hayden at the University of Saskatchewan of comments about Hilda Neatby made by her friends and family several years after her death seem to parallel this.

> Hilda Neatby was North Country to the core, she could not cheat, she always turned out the lights. Hilda did what had to be done. She did the best she could with what she had. She achieved what she did by brutal hard work and perseverance, not brilliance...She was critical and demanding of herself first and then of others.58

They suggest just that kind of singular, angular and strong mind and character imaged in the phrases of Cardinal Newman.

The deep sense of identity felt by Hilda Neatby for both the loneliness and the devotedness of the life of such a "votary of knowledge" as Henry Newman seemed to speak of may additionally have been suggested in a footnote to a statement in So Little For the Mind asserting that progressivism discouraged the entry into teaching of those who valued intellect and culture. In the note she referred to an English film, The Browning Version, shown in Canada a year or so before, as "a brilliant presentation of the position of the traditional scholar in a school which was turning to the rising sun of progressivism".59 The film was based upon a 1948 one-act play by Terence Rattigan and focussed upon a scholarly classics instructor who despite general disregard by his headmaster and most of his pupils continued his dedication to the highest qualities of mind needed in the study of the Greek and Latin writings. A few lines from the play may serve to suggest both the loneliness and the solace to be found in a life devoted to the mind that Hilda Neatby responded to in this film. The master, Andrew Crocker-Harris, is speaking to a colleague about a wholly unexpected present received from a pupil.

Andrew I want you to see this book that Taplow has given me, Hunter. Look. A translation of The Agamemnon, by Robert Browning. Do you see the inscription he has put into it?

Frank Yes, but it's no use to me, I'm

afraid. I never learnt Greek.

Andrew (It) means - in a rough translation: "God from afar look graciously upon a gentle master." It comes from a speech of Agamemnon's to Clytaemnestra.

Frank I see. Very pleasant and very apt.

Andrew Very pleasant. But perhaps not, after all so very apt.60

The mingling together here of the religious roots of Christianity, the cultural heritage of Western classicism, the sense of belonging to an intellectual community and the diffidence about one's perception by the general community, all suggest important sources of thought and feeling within Hilda Neatby from which she might have drawn as she composed So Little For the Mind.

The particular aim of this chapter has been to demonstrate the close relationship of Hilda Neatby's educational views in So Little For the Mind to those current in Canada's academic and intellectual circles. Final evidence for this may be found in the pattern of reviews of her education writings by members of that group. Among her more specific charges the allegation of an American distortion of Canadian values was most vigorously supported by B. K. Sandwell.

> This is a thoroughly Canadian book, dealing with Canadian needs and conditions, and making one of its chief charges against Canadian educational progressivism on the grounds that it is not Canadian, that it is based upon an alien philosophy, invented in, and chiefly held by a nation which early in its history cut itself off not only from the political but also from the social and

> cultural traditions of Europe in a way which Canada has never dreamed of following.61

Not all agreed, however. Frank Underhill, speaking at a special panel discussion on So Little For the Mind held during the annual meeting of the Learned Societies in June, 1954, argued that the main cause of the ills in Canadian public education lay not with Thomas Dewey but the legacy of Egerton Ryerson in the form of "a native interlocking directorate of orthodox bureaucrats".62 He went further and in an unintended irony expressed puckish alarm at Hilda Neatby's "almost theological" conservatism. The Queen's Quarterly reviewer of Debt of Our Reason entirely supported "the contemplative type of wisdom needed for human beings to develop the good life in the good society", yet also felt she should have been more prepared to recognize some improvements brought by the progressives.63 Nonetheless, Hilda Neatby's evocation of a traditional ideal of an "educated man" seemed to bring forth most empathy from this academic audience.

In the Canadian Historical Review C. B. Sissons called So Little For the Mind "brilliant" and condemned progressive educators for not seeing life "as lived sub specie aeternitatis but always as moving in a materialistic present".64 The reviewer at the University of Laval characterized her as the champion of all who deplored the weakening of culture and the passing of human learning.65 Guy Sylvestre, of the Royal Society of Canada, wrote of a significance to be found in her arguments that must remain perennial simply because of their insistence on absolute values.

> le plus grand argument qu'on pourrait peut-etre apporter pour montrer que les accusations de Miss Neatby ne sont pas sans fondement, c'est le fait qu'un si grand nombre de nos bacheliers, licencies et docteurs soient des satisfaits, qu'un si petit nombre d'entre eux poursuivent toute leur vie leurs recherches en vue de se perfectionner sans cesse dans leur specialite tout en s'interessant aux grandes questions generales a la lumiere desquelles ils pouraient situer leur specialite dans l'echelle des valeurs.66

Within such a view the basic assumptions of philosophic idealism continued to have wide support.

This chapter has traced the groups around Hilda Neatby, and the ideas and values that they represented. The character of the Canadian academic community in these years, the concerns presented by major writers in the Canadian historical community at this time, the values of the private circle of colleagues and friends, both professionally and through the Massey Commission, all played a part in and were represented in the views that Hilda Neatby was generating within herself from reflection on her own intellectual growth. All of this suggests that if Hilda Neatby was a singular person, when she wrote So Little For the Mind she by no means should be regarded as having represented only a singular conservative voice in Canadian intellectual life.

NOTES

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4 Ibid, p. 137.

5 Ibid., p. 140.

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CHAPTER VII

Assessing the national representativeness of Hilda Neatby's conservatism involves an analysis that goes beyond the particular intellectual tradition of conservative ideas from the past that she re-expressed and beyond the academic community. It must examine the varieties and levels of conservatism which her critique elicited from the broader Canadian public in its own time. Did the public respondents to the thesis she presented in So Little For the Mind appear to react to the issues with the same character of conservatism? Did they engage with the challenge of progressive education at the same level? How appropriate is it to assume that the public support for her attack on progressive education meant that these same publics understood and supported the fundamental character of the debate on human nature and purposes that she wished to sustain and restate?

Charting the contemporary public reflections of Hilda Neatby's conservative philosophy of education raises issues which are in fact the mirror image of those being confronted in recent analyses of progressive education. In 1976 Arthur Zilversmit pointed out that when Lawrence Cremin argued progressivism had a profound effect on public schools in the United States he assumed a relationship between official statements and classroom practice which was at the very least problematic.[1] Robert S. Patterson, in his studies of the implementation of progressive education in Canada, suggested that parallel studies in the development of progressive education in this country were in danger of making the same error.[2] What makes the investigations into conservative and progressive educational movements mirror images of each other is that each involves establishing satisfactorily the nature and the contents of the historical proofs for the congruence of explicit ideological statements by official spokespersons to the actual behavior and opinions of the public and public institutions. The challenge in both cases is to declare and justify the procedure for getting to the point, as Zilversmit suggested, where "ideology intersects with popular institutions". Whereas, however, in the one case the task foreseen by investigators like Zilversmit and Patterson is to accurately assess the level of practice of progressive education in the classroom, the aspect of the study of the Neatby debate dealt with here involves estimating how far commentary on the educational issues by members of the general public represented conscious and larger acceptance of the whole set of ideas in the conservative educational outlook she stood for.

The methodological considerations to be borne in mind when attempting to report on and give definition to the views of "the public" are challenging. Compared to book-length expositions and well developed articles the very brevity of such evidence as newspaper letters dictate some tentativeness when inferring a conscious attachment to a more explicit ideology. Even the very concept of ideology should be regarded as possibly problematic when dealing with such materials. In his 1977 study, Ideology and Education, Richard Pratte tried to develop a theory of ideology that was "free from the ideology as 'ism' approach that in some mysterious fashion has 'implications' for educational policy and practice".3 He proposed instead a view of ideology as something instrumental, "an intricate relationship involving the linking of belief to action".4 From such a viewpoint the most genuine character of the "public" mind would be captured not through an inference of a formal social philosophy as an "ism" but more tentative speculation about the social anxieties and discontents that caused such individuals or groups to reach for these ideas as an analogue.

> Metaphor, analogy, sloganizing, definitions, and the like, serve as useful techniques as they give to beliefs a concrete reality, directing action along a particular course toward some intended result. Ideology, then, provided the intellectual means whereby people are able to grasp in a simplified way the complex issues of society...5

The particular emphasis and imagery selected from the range of ideas making up Hilda Neatby's conservatism may act as clues to or corollaries of this view of ideology as code to social anxieties. The natural bifurcation of her educational philosophy into different kinds of desired intellectual outcomes and levels of moral reasoning, reflected, for example, in the choice of the metaphor of "cultivation" compared with "toughening", may act as a guide toward the particular character of relationship of ideology to discontent. The essential point is that there are several different levels and angles at which popular opinion can intersect with an ideology.

In all of these approaches to the material on "public" opinion the choice of material and the distribution of the reporting becomes crucial since variation and commonality over both space and time may be significant. The examination of newspaper materials, self-consciously regional in their coverage and commentary, lends itself well to this consideration enabling the observer to catch differences in the emphasis of reader and editorial opinion in different parts of the country. The rhythm of this material may demonstrate a wave-like motion progressing across the nation or a coincident rise and fall of concerns common to all regions over the same period. In addition one must be alert to the different levels of conscious derivation from a higher order principle or theory to be found in editorials, book reviews and readers' letters. The authority for inferring such a connection may be weakened as the statements themselves become much less extended and systematic.

In view of these factors the analysis of the public response to Hilda Neatby's ideas has followed a selection of materials that will enable some measure to be made of each of these angles of approach to the issue of what was public opinion. The material was based on the editorial and reader opinion in the daily newspapers in seven of Canada's major cities: Vancouver Province, Edmonton Journal, Regina Leader Post, Winnipeg Free Press, Toronto Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, Montreal Gazette and Halifax Chronicle-Herald. The survey of the Toronto Star reflected the need to run a check on the marked drop in commentary about Hilda Neatby in the Globe and Mail compared to newspapers representing the other provinces and regions. Since So Little For the Mind was published in October, 1953, the survey of all newspaper references to Hilda Neatby's criticisms of progressive education concentrated on the period of that school year from September, 1953, to June, 1954.

In that year expressions of discontent and alarm over public education had to compete for the attention of newspaper editors and readers with many other events. Internationally Canadians and Americans tried to come to terms with the inconclusive outcome of the Korean struggle at Panmunjon, while the French were forced to recognize the collapse of their Asian strategy in the valley of Dien Bien Phu. Britain's place in the hearts and minds of Canadians received a strong boost at the beginning of the period in the afterglow of the coronation of Elizabeth II and also at its end when Roger Bannister broke the four-minute mile at the Empire Games in Vancouver. The Commonwealth tour by the new queen and her consort to Australia and New Zealand during the southern hemisphere's summer was front-page news for many weeks of Canada's winter that year.

Each provincial newspaper also reflected a different set of issues which preoccupied its own province's public life. In British Columbia in that year the Vancouver Province headlined outbreaks of violence and public defiance associated with the Doukhobor Sons of Freedom many times more often than it reported on criticisms of progressive education associated with Hilda Neatby. No review of So Little For the Mind appeared at the time of its original publication in October and the first reference to the ideas of its author appeared in late November in an editorial suggesting that school life may have been made too "pleasant" to strengthen young people in the ways needed by business.

> What is implied here is that instead of our schools setting high standards which young people are required to meet, emphasis is placed on making school life more pleasant for students.
>
> This is the "softening up" process deplored by Dr. Hilda Neatby...She thinks so-called progressive education has failed to meet the needs of our "brutal, dangerous and stimulating age".6

The editor reported that employers claimed graduates were deficient in those basic academic skills seen as still being the basis of "real" education.

Academic standards were also part of the issue when on January 12 the Vancouver Province headlined a new school "storm" building up.7 The case involved the forced dismissal of a principal and former CCF candidate in Kelowna because of low marks scored by students on provincial exams. In this case the educational issue seemed entirely subordinate to the intense political feeling that had accompanied the 1953 election victory of the Social Credit party in British Columbia led by W. A. C. Bennett, whose home constituency was Kelowna. There was a suggestion that the issue was as much political as educational. Such a mingling of elements stirred memories of a "tempest" one year earlier over the content of an "Effective Living" course introduced into the public school curriculum of British Columbia.

That affair had begun with bitter attacks by a Socred member of the legislature that British Columbia teachers were under "socialist domination" and school children's minds were being "poisoned" by "rubbish" about sex.8 The private member used the opportunity of his maiden speech to target the student and teacher's materials for the course on "Effective Living" as symbols of a wider and more persistent corrosion of standards and morality in classrooms, a trend which he clearly made coincident with progressive education.

> Now, Mr. Speaker, this lowering of our education standard, these teachings and poisoning of the minds of our children from immoral textbooks did not occur overnight, but have been subtly impregnating our school curriculum over the past decade or more....9

The government promptly issued a statement disassociating itself from the member's allegations of the suggested socialist control of the teaching profession but did not contradict his views on the curriculum. The CCF opposition called it, "A cry from the Dark Ages", the superintendent of Vancouver schools described it as "plain nonsense", and the provincial president of the Parent Teacher Association described "Effective Living" as a course which was "very important and doing good work".10 Despite this the editor of that particular school manual was dismissed.

The readers letters over the next three weeks suggested that pupils themselves liked the content of the course.11 On the other hand parents and other adult correspondents usually supported traditional notions of academic skills and morality in the schoolroom.

> It is essential that we get back to the three Rs and cut out the frills. All we have to do is to talk with children today and find the lack of general knowledge, poor grammar and atrocious spelling, but a vast knowledge of sex etc...12

Editorial opinion on the controversy did not occur directly. It may be possible to gauge that position, nonetheless, from the commentary offered on the reaction of a number of British newspaper editors to a university address by Vincent Massey. It may be significant in itself that the editors placed the report of British editorial comment on the Governor General's statements regarding a "rootless" present generation on the front page, suggesting an estimate of interest their readers would take in noting that The Times of London had used the Canadian speech "as a peg for a critical examination of twentieth century values".13 The editor's own position reflected more closely the distribution of readers' letters on British Columbia's local version of this controversy.

> There is quite a lot of evidence that this calculated carelessness, this simulated nonchalance about our critical times, is protective insulation. Listen to our young people talk among themselves and you will find an astonishing amount of maturity and insight...If we are completely realistic, we will see that the "roots" of our older generation were actually embedded in prejudice and a good deal of ignorance.14

Direct commentary on Hilda Neatby's thesis on the intellectual and spiritual values of youth and their relationship to changes in Canadian schooling began with the review of So Little For the Mind in January, 1954. The author of the review article was the same superintendent of Vancouver schools who had been called on earlier to respond to charges in the legislature about courses in Effective Living. He condemned both the methodology and the conclusions of Hilda Neatby's study, with his strongest criticism concentrating on the relationship between democracy and education.

> Personally, I am not prepared to accept Dr. Hilda Neatby's criticisms of our youth and of our schools. I recall, as if it were yesterday, how magnificently our students and graduates responded when Canada needed them during the war years. Their records speak for themselves.
>
> Neither can I accept her position that secondary education is for the select few. Her statement that "the keepers of the gate are opening the citadel to the barbarians, cannot go unchallenged".15

The same issue of the Vancouver Province carried selections from So Little For the Mind along with a notice about a British Columbian link to Hilda Neatby's work through her collegial association with Donald J. Greene, formerly of the English department at the University of Saskatchewan.16

Only a small number of letters referring specifically to Hilda Neatby's criticisms appeared in the following weeks. All of these urged support for her views, as in the statement by an instructor at the Anglican Theological College.

> As one reasonably familiar with contemporary educational philosophy, and with the curricula of the Canadian educational system, I can only say that I regard Dr. Neatby's book as the most devastatingly effective assessment of the problem which has yet appeared.17

So Little For the Mind was less charitably reviewed in a panel organized for Education Week by the University of British Columbia CCF Club.18 It seemed hard to escape the mingling of education and political positions in British Columbia. The stress which could be created by placing strong political and ideological meanings on public education erupted again when the director of the Victoria mobile library was dismissed on account of the left wing nature of some of the library holdings.19 In so highly charged a context the unexpected finding was that the direct commentary on Hilda Neatby was relatively limited.

In the three prairie provinces public interest and participation in debate over progressive education and its critics as represented in editorials and readers' letters, was very marked. Within Alberta the Edmonton Journal carried many times more views on this part of public life than appeared in the Vancouver Province and Hilda Neatby's views received double exposure through a remarkable series of critical articles on progressive education by W. G. Hardy, classics professor at the University of Alberta. Originally published in the Calgary Herald, they were reprinted in the Edmonton Journal as well as two other Alberta dailies. Also in partial contrast to British Columbia there was much less of a tendency to view educational issues through the filter of provincial politics.

One element in the public outlook reflected in the Edmonton Journal at this time deserves initial note despite the absence of an explicit association with comments on the philosophy of public education. On September 31, 1953, Premier Manning, in an address to the Canadian Medical Association, spoke dismissively of the British people as tied to the past, without vigor or high spiritual values. The response was such a number of letters condemning the premier's comments that the Edmonton Journal declared it could not possibly publish them all.20 One week later the editor had to declare the letters page closed to further comment on this issue. For these respondents there was clearly a strong attachment to the British tie in their sense of identity. Whether this carried with it an obverse suspicion of the philosophy and program of progressive education as an American and thus alien influence is problematic. When in editorials and readers' letters the issue was cast in terms of opposing forces it rarely appeared as a confrontation between American and Canadian values. Instead, as in the following excerpt from an editorial on October 13, the controversy was seen as one common to both countries wherein Canadian critics clearly found reassurance in placing their feet where United States critics had trod before.

> The government and its educational advisers need to realize that the system of progressive education which they adopted so thoroughly and uncritically from the United States is now under an ever-increasing storm of criticism. It has failed to stand the test of reality, in the schools or outside. In both Canada and the United States "progressive" methods are under attack not only by business but by educators, scholars and scientists, army officers, and an ever-growing host of parents....21

The priority given to businessmen's complaints here reflected the contents of a brief to the provincial cabinet by the Alberta Chamber of Commerce alleging students were "insufficiently grounded in the basic subjects, and thus poorly prepared for business and industrial life".22 A few correspondents challenged such critics, such as the reader who claimed the editorial of October 13 was an illustration of the very faults of intellectual integrity it brought against progressive education.23 These views were far outnumbered in the columns of the Edmonton Journal by those that complained of shortcomings. The perception of the insufficiency was two-fold, a weakening of moral fibre as well as basic mental competencies.

The strong association made between academic and moral rigour was underlined by the headlining of the review of So Little For the Mind as "Soft Schools and Hard".

> Dr. Neatby disagrees very strongly with everything which leaves young people with the impression that learning is just a bowl of cherries and life much the same. Soft schooling, she believes, is poor preparation for life in this world which is still a very hard school itself.24

Editors found many opportunities to restate this theme that personal and national well being depended upon the education system's ability to generate internalized standards of intellect and spirit in students. The thrust of such editorials was often echoed by readers. References in Fall Convocation speeches to "disturbing" trends in modern education and in an address by United States statesman, Bernard Baruch, to a "choice between freedom to discipline ourselves and the slavery that others would impose upon us" brought the editors to declare that civilization itself was at stake and might only be reprieved through "a reconstruction of modern education".25 When this theme of concern over progressive education was restated in readers letters it was characterized by its focus on "fundamentals", "basics" or "Three Rs". The viewpoint of most writers was as parents of children who must make their way in life based on their knowledge and skills.

> ...it is alarming and frustrating to see our children subjected to a curriculum which lays so little stress on the fundamental courses leading to intelligent speech,

> coherent writing, a taste for good literature, some logic, and a few basic principles of good citizenship.26

Whatever distracted from this training, such as the introduction of career guidance, was regarded as improper use of time and resources.27

On February 1 appeared the first of W. G. Hardy's series of critical articles on progressive education in Alberta. This substantial statement, originally commissioned and subsequently separately printed and published by the Calgary Herald, appeared in six parts in the Edmonton Journal over the first two weeks of February, and became the focus of the commentary by editors and readers in that paper about the issues raised by Hilda Neatby. Hardy began with a rhetorical question based upon the opening statement in So Little For the Mind.

> Are our Canadian high school graduates, as a result of the new education..."ignorant, lazy and unaware of the exacting demands of a society from the realities of which they have been carefully insulated?" In a word, now that the progressivists have had their fling, is it time to let the educational pendulum swing back?28

Progressive education he saw as the outcome of mass education, and in particular of mass secondary education, which caused professional educators to "discover" Dewey and "flood" the country with a diluted form of his ideas.29 The outcome was a dismantling of the traditional components and standards of a liberal academic education, particularly in the area of classical studies.30 The issue had dimensions beyond intellectual competencies because it reflected assumptions about democracy that, as Hardy noted, Hilda Neatby had also found questionable.

> Dr. Neatby has deplored the tendency toward "equalitarianism" in our education and our civilization. On the one side, unless the education is real education, you get a mass of people who, through ignorance and thinking they know when they don't know, are easy meat for the demagogue. On the other side the leaders, whom democracy needs more than any other form of society, are not given their proper chance to develop.31

Hardy also clearly believed in the importance of how progressive education related to the differences in cultural values between Canada and the United States since "the United States is, essentially, whatever may be said to the contrary, the home of the new education in both theory and practice".32 The final statements made a particular point of underlining this dimension.

> The plea of the traditionalist, then is to keep Canadian education free from the excesses of progressivism...Through this type of education our youth in general will have a better chance to be equipped for life in the modern world. In this way we may be able to maintain and develop a culture which is Canadian.33

Hardy's series of articles provoked a brisk traffic in reader comment. One or two writers might demand scientific and statistical proof of Hardy's claims of an academic decline.34 Another wrote a tongue-in-cheek rebuke to Hardy accusing him of wanting to make schools serve only to the academic elite.

> Thus, thirty years ago, the school was playing its proper function. It got the elite into university and kept the rest out.35

Far more writers were in support of Hardy's position. Yet it is noteworthy that most of these correspondents neglected concerns over the putative impact of progressive education on Canadian values and whether it represented a different set of assumptions about democracy than was to be found in the Canadian experience. The emphasis of most was the same as that expressed by the parent anxious about the career possibilities for his sons.

> The sooner we get back to teaching the 3 Rs, spelling and grammar...history and geography the better...It is not a high school diploma I want for them but an education.36

Almost as rarely reflected was the dimension of the issue which saw a relationship between the character of public education and the transmission or protection of western culture, particularly in the context of the ideological rivalry with the Soviet Union. When it did occur it was apparent that the writer, whether editor or correspondent, viewed this as a perspective that divided camps within both Canada and the United States in a similar way rather than suggesting a different importance attached to the issue in each country based on different patterns of cultural attachment to Europe. American critics such as Walter Lippmann, when they asked of young people whether "(if) they have no common culture, is it astounding that they have no common purpose?", were regarded as putting questions that applied to Canada as much as the United States, without any explicit qualification for any difference in situation or historical experience.37

A sequel to the reaction to the Hardy series occurred following the reporting of remarks by Mortimer , Watts, Director of Curriculum for the province during a Parent Teacher Association panel discussion based on Hilda Neatby's criticisms and titled "Is Modern

Education Anti-Intellectual?". It has been alleged that Watts represented the change in the Alberta curriculum away from H. C. Newland's stress on rationalism towards a new stress on adjustment to social values.38 His statements about the dangers of too much intellectualism brought brisk replies. One correspondent alleged that the provincial department of education and the University of Alberta faculty of education was "rife" with the type of progressive education that emphasized social competence.39 Others attacked Watt's equation of democracy with equality 40 or described the cost of claiming extravagantly to teach "the whole child" as being a neglect of the sufficiently demanding task of passing on an "appreciation of our heritage".41

The publishers of the Edmonton Journal, clearly affected by the high level of reader interest in the issue of education, commissioned a further series of articles by one of their own associate editors in March, 1954.42 The nature of these writings, a set of broad reflections on the general nature of education rather than advocacy on behalf of one side or the other in the controversy over progressive education, was not well suited to brief commentary by readers. Once again it was notable that readers' letters concerned themselves most of all with the desirability of discipline and traditional subjects in the classroom.43 A distinction was evident within this position, however. Only one or two explicitly supported the call in So Little For the Mind of requiring academic vigor from all students and requiring those who did not measure up to leave.44 Most defined the equation between morality and intellect not at the level of moral reasoning and academic excellence but rather at the level of orderliness and the three Rs. The reflection of Hilda Neatby's ideas was only partial.

As a native daughter of Saskatchewan Hilda Neatby was a considerable focus of commentary in that province. Woodrow S. Lloyd, Minister of Education, was most frequently reported in the role of rebutting the accusations of So Little For the Mind as they might be applied to that province. The position he set forth was a natural development of claims by representatives of the department of education on progressive education, as in the statement by one superintendent that not too much "soft psychology" was being practiced in Regina schools and "efforts are being made to take care of it".45 The teachers' conventions at Moose Jaw and Regina in October gave prominent place to Alberta spokesmen such as Dr. M. E. Lazerte speaking in support of individualism in the classroom and Dr. H. T. Coutts calling for a revision of traditional humanities programs in order to create broader outlooks and attitudes.46 Woodrow Lloyd was himself a speaker at the first of these conventions and in his speech he denied that there had been any decline in the three Rs and praised efforts at making schools more interesting.47

Hilda Neatby's ideas became the focus of the debate in the Leader-Post between traditionalism and progressivism following the review of So Little For the Mind by her friend and former colleague at Regina College, Roger Graham. He predicted her book would mark the beginning of a "rousing controversy"

> "So Little For the Mind"...is the first extended attack on progressive education in Canada. It will delight a great many people who have been waiting for someone to sum up and give cogent expression to their own misgivings about what is going on in our schools.48

The editors of the Leader-Post placed Hilda Neatby's concerns alongside those of Robert Maynard Hutchins about the relationship between the tendencies of mass culture and mass education wherein there was "only a series of second-hand conventional concepts accepted by the individual mind schooled to dodge the job of crystallizing its own unique series".49

Woodrow Lloyd used the opportunity of the Swift Current teachers' convention to publicly respond to So Little For the Mind. His reply was based on a characterization of Hilda Neatby's thesis which reduced it to a concern about the three Rs alone which he viewed as wholly insufficient for modern living.50 The retiring president of that same convention went further than "insufficient" and called the new educational criticisms "evil" compared with "honest criticism, well meant" which was "not hard to tolerate".51

In an interview with the Leader Post in December, 1953, LLoyd himself became sharper in the tone of his comments upon So Little For the Mind. He claimed Hilda Neatby had taken statements out of context. He denied any contempt for the past among educators who were "constantly searching what has gone before and retaining all that is best from our heritage".52 Nonetheless excerpts from So Little For the Mind were reprinted in the same issue on the editorial page "in view of the wide interest which continues to be manifested in Dr. Hilda Neatby's recently published indictment of

Canadian education".53 In the same month a debate on So Little For the Mind hosted by a local parent-teacher association drew a crowd of more than one hundred,54 and a further editorial page article praised Hilda Neatby for highlighting shortcomings in progressive education in the development of moral and mental character.

> By over-emphasizing the right and privileges of the student and encouraging many non-essential activities...the so-called progressives have deprived him of the very exercises and efforts necessary for his mental development and training.55

Three days later the editors provided a counter-view to this by reprinting a critical review of So Little For the Mind that had appeared in the November newsletter of the Canadian Education Review.56

In contrast to this activity on the editorial side of the Leader-Post in December there was very little reflection of the debate in readers' letters. There was a very pointed exchange that month in the correspondence column between Leslie Neatby, brother of Hilda Neatby, and Woodrow Lloyd based on Leslie Neatby's allegation of "thinly disguised propaganda" by the CCF government in the social studies program of that province.57 In the new year this contrast between the quantifiable public opinion of the correspondent's column and the public voice represented on convention platforms and editorial columns continued. Woodrow Lloyd continued to focus on Hilda Neatby's criticisms in his addresses to educational conferences, claiming that she "painted a black picture that appealed more to the emotions than to the reality of reason".58 The editors reported sympathetically on a convocation speech at the University of Alberta whose plea for a strong individualism based on a more rigorous curriculum seemed very close to Hilda Neatby's concerns.59 In March, 1954, for Education Week, the editors commissioned a set of statements by Woodrow Lloyd and two Saskatchewan educators on the controversy over progressive education, statements carefully selected to represent positions for and against Hilda Neatby's views.60 No matching reader commentary appeared.

As the school year wound down the platform references to the critics by representatives of the department of education continued to discount the substance of the criticism. The director of curriculum for the province said he could not understand the sarcasm and bitterness that accompanied current criticism".61 Woodrow Lloyd, through statements that curriculum ought to be determined by an "appreciation of the rights of the people - all the people", hinted that the critics were anti-democratic.62 Nonetheless, this did not prevent the Saskatchewan Federation of Home and School, to whom Lloyd had made his remarks, from passing a resolution on their final day requesting a return to greater emphasis on the three Rs.63 Once again, however, if this can be seen as a reflection of Hilda Neatby's concerns, then it was so only in a very limited and narrow view of her conception of the relationship between intellect and virtue.

It was not in Saskatchewan but in the neighboring province of Manitoba that interest in Hilda Neatby's views on progressive education, as measured in commentary by editors and correspondents in major provincial newspapers, was at its highest in the Prairie region. Signs of a receptive climate for Hilda Neatby's concerns were evident before the publication of So Little For the Mind. A report in mid-October on pupil reading competence reflected a school board decision to investigate whether anything was wrong in the academic standards.64 An editorial on school financing spoke of "an unease throughout the city as to the reality of our educational accomplishment".65 A few days later the Winnipeg Free Press reviewed So Little For the Mind on the editorial page itself. The reviewer enthusiastically endorsed Hilda Neatby's accusations that teachers were discouraged from questioning a curricula which seemed intended to indoctrinate the values of collectivism rather than individualism, her characterization of progressive education as anti-intellectual and anti-cultural, and her program for schools and teachers that would see it as a main responsibility to convey "the intellectual, cultural and moral training which represents the best in a long and honorable tradition of western civilization".66 The response to this warm commendation was not slow in appearing in the "Letters" column. Once again critics and defenders of Hilda Neatby's views concerned themselves with different aspects of her argument. A sceptic found her preferred program of studies as "unrealistic" in an age of mass education since it seemed suited only for a gifted few.67 A supporter praised So Little For the Mind for speaking out on behalf of muzzled teachers to sound her alarm about the standards of Canadian education.68 Two days later the editors of the Winnipeg Free Press, citing an "onslaught" on modern Canadian school curricula both national and local, issued an invitation on page one for readers to state their views, promising to publish the best ten.69

In describing the response one week later the editors stated that "Manitoba's school curriculum and modern education generally found few friends but many outspoken critics". The critics were most concerned with intellectual skills at the level of the three Rs and character in the shape of orderliness and discipline, along with the loss of studies in British history due to increases in student options.

> The progressive curriculum has back-fired. Its elaborate program has attempted so much and produced so little. It must return to reality, discipline and fundamentals.
>
> Where is our sadly missed mental arithmetic? Give us back our history. What future without knowledge of the past?70

So many letters were received that the editors printed another set of responses in the next day's issue.71 The dissatisfaction expressed by general correspondents with existing curricula was cited as part of the background for changes announced by the minister of education that would expand the provincial department of education's general curriculum committee to include more lay people.72

Over the next two months although there was a lull in the explicit newspaper commentary on Hilda Neatby's views on progressive education reader awareness of the issues she was raising was maintained through a number of related news items. The President of Yale was reported sounding alarm over academic standards and liberal arts teaching in secondary schools in that country.73 The editors also noted Hilda Neatby's nomination as one of Canada's Women-of-the-Year on the basis of So Little For the Mind.74 One week later it was made a front-page item that she and Norman Mackenzie, president of the University of British Columbia and associate on the Massey Commission, were to be speakers during the Easter Convention of the Manitoba Teachers' Association and the Manitoba Education Association.75 Later that month, in addresses to the Winnipeg branch of the Humanities Association of Canada, progressive education was attacked as anti-intellectual and rigidly egalitarian.76 Again, within a matter of days, the same general view was promoted in a major editorial page article in which the writer praised proposals to re-establish entrance exams for high school and disparaged the development of courses at the high school level for those going neither to University or skilled occupations.

> Must standards be watered down...that pupils and their parents may be deluded into thinking they have something which they have not earned? It is this sort of thing that has brought against our schools the criticism of being anti-intellectual...77

Once again the emphasis was upon the value of standards for the sake of the difficulty and implied moral toughening that accompanied them rather than clarifying the particular learnings and cultural understanding that would be thereby accomplished.

The same focus upon the "hardening" of character and finding a way of separating wheat from chaff in moral terms rather than a broadened and deepened grasp of the nature of the Western intellectual and cultural tradition appeared in a later editorial page statement distinguishing between traditional and progressive approaches to education.

> Supporters of the "traditional" type of school maintain that it was genuinely realistic, that its pupils discovered that life was a struggle for existence and that good hard work was essential to survival. It challenged their mental powers and strengthened their moral fibre.78

Hilda Neatby herself, when questioned by reporters during her attendance at the Manitoba Educational Association conference found herself being asked to focus on her statements that she was prepared to restrict access to secondary education rather than explain her concern with the teaching and mastery of particular subject matter.79

That this position might have broader implications for the proper character of democracy itself, as Hilda Neatby herself believed, was a focus chosen by few correspondents who sympathized with her concerns. As the questions put to her implied, the linkage between school promotion policies and the ethos of democracy was most commonly raised by those who opposed Hilda Neatby's position. Nonetheless, at least one speaker at the conference, principal of United College attached to the University of Manitoba, said that the application of unexamined notions of democracy to the school system could be "dangerous".

> [It] holds the alarming assumption that democracy itself provides the norms by which the ends of education are to be determined.

> This...was the principle on which all totalitarian societies proceed.80

And when the conference was over a most sympathetic review article used excerpts from Hilda Neatby's addresses at the conference to set the accusations of "aristocratic" against an association of general scholarship and autonomous intellect in a way that captured the issue of her position.

> "Men died for intellectual freedom before the age of democracy...The herd is threatening to wash over the western world, not to integrate but to absorb...an educated individual endures solitude and enjoys leisure." Thus Dr. Neatby.81

There was yet one further occasion in Winnipeg that school year when the ideas of Hilda Neatby received vigorous analysis. The Learned Societies held their annual conference at the University of Manitoba in June, 1954. Included in the program was a symposium on So Little For the Mind, with Frank Underhill as the lead off speaker. In the context of coverage of Hilda Neatby's ideas by the Winnipeg Free Press the year long high level of editorial interest was once again reflected in a major review article on the editorial page itself. The reporter declared that "on the whole" it had been a "rough morning" at the symposium for progressives.82 Reviewing the material that had appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press since the previous September one might say the same for most of that school year in Manitoba.

Matters were quite different in the columns of the Toronto Globe and Mail. The number of specific references to Hilda Neatby and So Little For the Mind was sharply reduced and the reception given her criticisms, based on editorial and correspondents' statements was much more equivocal and projected a sense of "not in Ontario". The minister of education, for example, speaking at a luncheon of Canadian National Exhibition directors in early September, described Ontario's system of public education as continuing to incorporate industry and competition, in contrast with "other educational areas".83 The editorial marking the beginning of another school year adopted a middle ground between philosophies of education as social salvation versus the three Rs and conveyed no sense of a public crisis of confidence in their school system.84

Governor-General Massey's centennial address to University College in mid-October in which he expressed concern over the "materialism" of modern life and called upon universities to uphold their traditional function of education in the humanities was reprinted with editorial praise for its "restatement of a problem which is a fundamental concern of most Canadian universities".85 Yet when So Little For the Mind, which applied the same theme to the public school curriculum, was published later that month it did not receive the same editorial endorsement. Two reviews did appear. The first of these did express concern about a lowering of academic standards in Ontario schools "as a result of the democratic process which obviously tends to level all subject to it".86 The second review appeared without particular emphasis in the midst of the book review section and was entirely a paraphrase of the text with no extension of its thesis to local or provincial issues in education.87 Neither review brought a direct response by either editor or correspondents. Yet an editorial statement did come out in strong support of a titled British parliamentarian, Lady Violet Bonham Carter, who, as the first woman to deliver the Sir Robert A. Falconer Lecture at the University of Toronto, had spoken on a theme that paralleled Hilda Neatby's concerns, the question of whether mass democracy meant a challenge to "the supreme right of the individual mind".88 The editors responded warmly both to the message and the British association.

> Lady Violet sounded a clarion call for independence of mind, adventurous living, resistance to the deadening and destructive influence of the forces and institutions which produce mass thinking and acting. Such a call should find strong response in this partner of the British Commonwealth.89

When they sought a context of Canadian life in which these injunctions should be applied, however, they spoke of the state of party politics and not public education. The public perception of schooling in Ontario at the end of 1953 as reflected in The Globe and Mail seemed captured by a review article on December 29 which declared the education scene as "reasonably calm" despite concerns over school financing and a drawn-out dispute between secondary and elementary teachers over a single salary schedule.90 There was no reference to controversy in other parts of the country surrounding the criticisms in So Little For the Mind. Hilda Neatby's views did not appear as a reference in the correspondents column until the beginning of 1954 and then as a foil for a correspondent advocating an untraditional, integrated approach to school studies.91 On the other hand a major public statement supporting education positions very similar to Hilda Neatby's was prominently reported. The president of the University of Toronto, Sidney Smith, used the excesses of McCarthyism to draw distinctions between the ethos of Canada and the United States.

> In our own century, freedom of thought has been stifled in the name of the state under dictatorships and it is now being threatened in the name of democracy.
>
> Canadians are participants in the British tradition of liberty with its undergirding of personal and civic responsibility.92

The importance attached to the British connection in this statement was echoed in a lead editorial later that same month which called for more British immigration to Canada, "for obvious reasons of language and tradition".93 No statement appeared in editorials, however, which suggested that public schooling was one of the areas of national life where concern should be expressed over the intrusion of American values into the Canadian way of life.

The first suggestion in the Globe and Mail that such a discussion was occurring among Canadians appeared in a February newsletter about a radio debate to be held between Hilda Neatby and Dr. C. E. Phillips of the Ontario College of Education. The debate was staged for Saskatoon, not Toronto. The same item noted, nonetheless, that So Little For the Mind had remained Canada's most controversial book since its publication in the previous fall and was the most read non-fiction book at the Toronto Public Libraries.94 March and Education week brought Hilda Neatby herself to Victoria College at the University of Toronto to deliver the guest Armstrong Lecture where she drew one of the largest crowds to be assembled in University of Toronto's Convocation Hall. The news report implied that the educational debate this represented was an anticipated rather than an already experienced event in Ontario and gave Hilda Neatby the character of a critic from the regions beyond Ontario.

> It is quite possible that this year the traditionally warm atmosphere of the [Education Week] open house will be somewhat disturbed by the discontented rumbling of iconoclasts in the classroom. For there has been increasing evidence that parents are in a critical frame of mind about their children's schooling. In this they have been encouraged - if not led - particularly by a professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. Hilda Neatby.95

This impression of a certain arms-length stance towards Hilda Neatby's views was evident in a letter written a few days later by the Principal of Victoria College and the host of the Armstrong Lecture. He dissociated the Lecture Committee from any apparent endorsement of her views. He gave it as his view that "the Ontario school system has done a magnificent job of adapting its school system to contemporary conditions," although "serious consideration" deserved to be given to "a critic of Miss Neatby's standing".96 This was more charity than was accorded to her views in "one of the strongest counter-attacks made by an educationist in Toronto".97 In a panel discussion in March, 1954, John Long, director of educational research at Ontario College of Education, was reported as calling Hilda Neatby's ideas "not worth a nickel each" because they did not describe what actually went on in the classroom. Three weeks later an editorial on the occasion of the annual convention of the Ontario Educational Association offered an equally strong rebuttal of the general criticism of education in Ontario and wholly rejected the view that it had been taken over by experts.98

A change in the pattern of news reports and the frequency of editorial and correspondents statements on education became detectable, nonetheless. For the first time readers' letters on education began to appear, letters that supported Hilda Neatby's concerns about how well the pupil's intellect was being cultivated in the classroom.99 Education increasingly became perceived as controversial. Reports of the proceedings of that same convention of the Ontario Educational Association informed readers of an increasingly questioning tone, quite often in terms of the points raised in So Little For the Mind.

> The convention was marked by intense enthusiasm. Canadian education has become a subject of controversy, and everyone seems to have an opinion. The ideas of Dr. Hilda Neatby, who was responsible for much of the controversy, were in no small degree responsible for the partisanship.100

One area of controversy was the issue of the adequacy of education for the top academic pupils. President Sydney Smith of the University of Toronto blamed the low emphasis this received on the report of the Hope Commission.101 On another front the Toronto School Board directed its administration to check teaching methods to ensure that enough attention was being placed on fundamentals.102 An editorial in the June 5 Globe and Mail, commenting on a recent speech by Mr. Justice Hope, supported his general view that schooling has now to take account of many factors in motivation of the child and that "we cannot return to old thinking".103 Its own pages, however, carried an increasing number of signs that whether they could be perceived as old or new, the kind of questions that Hilda Neatby's name had long been associated with elsewhere were being raised in Toronto, though later and without the kind of editorial endorsement that had been so noticeable elsewhere.

The clear difference between the Globe and Mail and western newspapers in the quantity and tone of editorial and reader commentary on Hilda Neatby's educational criticisms was reflected also in the other major daily newspaper in Toronto, the Daily Star. There was clear support for what were seen as "modern" methods, particularly defined as those that were thought to reflect the emphasis upon good physical and emotional development of children. As the school year began the editors used the weekly supplement to explain a new guidance system being established in Ontario Schools, reporting without comment on a statement by its director which might almost have been fabricated by Hilda Neatby for her own purposes.

> "It isn't the child who cuts up who is the biggest worry of the counsellor," says...[the] chief of the guidance department of the Toronto board of education. "It is the mousy little youngster who keeps his nose to the grindstone and never gets into trouble. He is a personality problem with two strikes against him."104

Supportive editorial statements about providing additional mental health and social services for Toronto schoolchildren appeared quite regularly in the first part of the school year.105 So Little For the Mind had received a very brief review in October.106 In March, five months later, appeared the first editorial which suggested any cause for concern about public schools other than the problems associated with growth. It took note of reports on the low number of elementary students who completed high school and referred to surveys that revealed inadequacies in elementary schools. The editors, however, focussed on matters of staffing and equipment, not philosophy.107 The readers' letters began to reflect other views. Some teachers wrote to dissociate themselves from criticism of Hilda Neatby by editors of educational journals.108 Another echoed Hilda Neatby's call for a distinctive Canadian philosophy of education different from American progressive education.109 The editors of the Daily Star did not speak in such terms. Nonetheless, by the time of the annual convention of the Ontario Educational Association in late April they were writing in terms that assumed the context of a debate, if not a controversy, over progressive education.

> Inevitably, the great debate between the progressivist and traditionalist schools of educational thought was reflected in the convention. Frank and full discussion in such widely representative gatherings should clarify what is valid in each of these philosophies, and help to produce a synthesis of the best elements of both for application in the schools.110

The tone was calm, without a sense of crisis, certainly not local crisis. Ontario's system of education appeared open for debate, no indictment.

This made a contrast with the support offered in the editorial columns of the Montreal Gazette for the criticisms of Hilda Neatby in this same period. Energetic debate over her ideas also appeared in the correspondence columns. Like other areas of Canada the Protestant school system of Quebec was experiencing tremendous growth in the fall of 1953. There were six thousand more children in the Protestant system than the year before.111 A report to the Protestant Committee of the Quebec Council of Education reported building sixteen new schools in one year.112 Regarding the philosophy of education that should accompany the expansion, at the annual convention of the Provincial Association of the Protestant Teachers in early October, C. E. Phillips, of the Ontario College of Education, spoke on behalf of progressive education .

> ...education today is superior to education in the past, whether the past is defined as 25, 50, 75 or 100 years ago, or any larger number of years ago that any critic has the temerity to suggest.113

The editors in The Gazette had a different view. They perceived some progressive educators as being opposed to anything that smacked of academic elitism and expressed their concern over the view of democracy this implied.

> The emphasis upon mediocrity, the tendency to exalt a low common measure of accomplishment, is not entirely separated from the theory that society itself should be organized along similar lines. It is not only in the classroom...that those who exceed the standard may be looked upon askance, as exhibiting a regrettably anti-social tendency.114

This outlook might be expected to welcome the views of Hilda Neatby and so it proved in an editorial written one week later which regarded the recent publication of So Little For the Mind as a major synthesis of concerns over progressive education in Canada.

The editors saw Hilda Neatby voicing the concerns of many and not just of herself. They focussed on the importance of high levels of knowledge and scholarship about cultural heritage "that would get back again to learning something of greatness", and the importance of the discipline this requires lest the student "never really learns the exertions of living".115 Like Hilda Neatby they set their conservative notions about school within a more general social conservatism.

> The ills of modern education are precisely the ills of modern society. Our educators are the slaves of our social defects. The retreat from discipline and work is not an inexplicable phenomenon of the schools. It is all about us.116

An additional theme of So Little For the Mind was echoed in an editorial on December 2 which commented on an address by the president of Yale. University graduates, they stated, "must have some knowledge of what civilization itself stands for".117 All genuine professional education based itself upon a broad liberal education which "introduces the student to the heritage of two thousand years of western civilization".118

The first specific allusion to Hilda Neatby in the correspondents column of The Gazette came at about this same time. It occurred as part of an energetic exchange of letters over a period of two or three weeks. The issue was whether the CBC might be suitably used to round out the work of the public education system in moulding cultural values in Canada by promoting "intelligence, maturity and sensitivity".119 What was noteworthy in this dispute, whose focus was on the relationship between public broadcasting and levels of cultural knowledge in society, was that Hilda Neatby's name was used by both sides as a kind of short-hand for valuing "Shakespeare, Chaucer and Mozart instead of Mickey Spillane", with all of the additional resonances of view about American popular culture that this implied.120

Other images in the public mind of Hilda Neatby's position were revealed in responses to two extended criticisms of her ideas. The first were a result of a very long and substantial criticism of Hilda Neatby's analysis of public education in the letters column of The Gazette in January, 1954.121 It attacked So Little For the Mind as an unfair caricature of Canadian classrooms and students. The letters which replied in her defence reveal the range of positions with which she might be identified by different individuals and groups. Eugene Forsey, mixture of constitutional conservative and social radical and at that time a lecturer at McGill, rejected the idea that Hilda Neatby's notion of a suitable curriculum for high school would exclude half the children from secondary education.

> Where does he get the...assumption. Isn't it possible, as Dr. Neatby suggests that the "experts" underestimate the ordinary child's "academic intelligence"?122

The next correspondent wrote in apocalyptic terms of a need for "repentance before it is too late" and of "judgement" that a society might bring upon itself.123 Another saw Hilda Neatby as being opposed to the dismantling of classroom arrangements that set high standards of learning and effort for students to conform to.124 The second set of letters was provoked by a statement from a McGill sociologist challenging the ideas of So Little For the Mind.125 Three replies appeared within the next two weeks. The first valued Hilda Neatby as a champion of the school's role in maintaining "our race's heritage being lost with neglect of history, literature, grammar".126 The second letter repeated this theme and set Hilda Neatby's views alongside those of major American and British critics of Dewey such as Robert Hutchins, Bernard Idings Bell and Sir Richard Livingstone.127 The third reply raised this concern to an echo of fears about generations yet to come "free of 'facts, logic and discipline'".128

The final occasion for commentary on Hilda Neatby was associated with her remarks as inaugural speaker during Education Week in March. The newspaper report of the invitation included an assessment of her as "the lady who has caused the biggest dust-up in Canadian education this year".129 Editorially The Gazette, commenting on the general context of the invitation, suggested that she might have on occasion overstated her view but that she had seized the main issues.130 On the day following her address the newspaper published a private interview with Hilda Neatby.131 This reflected the interested and supportive stance generally taken in The Gazette towards the concerns with which she was associated. At this same time editors and correspondents in The Gazette were vigorously opposing the changes in Canadian official symbols being introduced by the government of Louis St.Laurent that seemed to represent a lessening of the ties with Britain. Readers wrote letters to oppose the removal of the crown from military insignia.132 The editors praised the British heritage and wrote of "the Crown that binds the Commonwealth together in the fellowship of freedom".133

The context in which the Halifax Chronicle-Herald commented on Hilda Neatby's concerns about the erosion of the western and specifically British cultural heritage contained some more immediate educational pressures arising from a very serious shortage of qualified teachers. In British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario the newspapers reported that school year on how provincial departments of education were proposing ways of shortening the training period so as to increase the teacher supply to meet the new surge in classroom numbers as the post-war increase in the birth-rate began to affect the elementary schools. In Nova Scotia the Halifax Chronicle-Herald reported in mid-September, 1953, that "only" four schools were closed in Cape Breton because of a lack of teachers.134 Nova Scotia as a whole that fall was short one hundred sixty-six teachers.135 The relationship of such shortfalls in trained teachers, and the limits on public funding of education this implied, to the views on progressive education and philosophies of education is uncertain, but they may have contributed unstated considerations of the lesser cost of traditional versus progressive methods to the stated arguments on the virtues of one philosophy over the other.

The philosophy of the editors of the Chronicle-Herald was unquestionably based on an attachment to the ideal of a liberal education based on the cultivation of the mind for its own sake. They responded enthusiastically in the fall of 1953 to a Convocation address on that theme at St. Francis Xavier University by Governor General Vincent Massey.

> The...phrase (the liberal arts) which the Governor General used is a reminder of an older, but by no means less valuable, educational principle than that which today receives most attention...Such an educational system finds its primary function in the production, not of specialists, but of men and women of character.136

That fall of 1953 this deep attachment to the classic views of a liberal education produced a series of editorials remarkable for the independent echoes they created of major themes in So Little For the Mind, yet all without any reference to Hilda Neatby herself. Doubts were raised about whether the Greek ideal of education was based upon a concept of and attitude to leisure that could be maintained since "education has become the right of the majority, instead of the privilege of the few".137 The editors insisted that in the balanced life alongside activity went contemplation. The disparagement of "the thinker, the dreamer, the idealist" was rejected, since "to insist that only in action, rather than in contemplation, can enjoyment be found...is grossly to underestimate both the powers and the pleasures of the mind".138 They gave religious thought a key role in the nature and purpose of education.

> Any analysis of a man which ignores his religious outlook...fails to take into consideration the "total man"...If we now fail to strengthen and preserve these convictions in the minds of the rising generation, the maintenance of our free institutions, which had their origins in religious thinking, will be a task parallel to that of keeping a house standing after its foundations have been eliminated.139

They might almost have been penned by Hilda Neatby herself although direct reference to her in the editorials never occurred.140 In their level of thought about education they represented a somewhat different set of priorities than those suggested in the report of a public survey by the Nova Scotia Provincial Department of Education published two months later. The latter reflected the immediate concern with having enough properly qualified teachers and physical conditions.141

The correspondents column in the Chronicle-Herald was modest compared to the activity in other newspapers. Schools and education were rarely the topic of what few letters appeared. The appearance in January, 1954, of a long, substantive commentary on the education department's survey was a departure from this pattern. Strenuously it put forward arguments on the prime importance of teacher mastery of subject matter, the need to meet the needs of the brightest and best, and that effort and strain were a condition of schooling to be required, not avoided.

> Surely the hope of democracy lies in the development, to its highest efficiency, of the capacities of the most intelligent...A community that feels that the effort we are now making to educate these potential leaders is adequate has therefore lost all touch with educational reality.142

This letter in turn produced further letters on both sides of the question of the benefits and costs of traditional education, though still with no specific reference to So Little For the Mind or its author.143 At the end of this exchange and at the more extreme edge of reader commentary appeared a strong statement by a reader, the more striking because of its rarity in the material surveyed, portraying John Dewey as the dupe of Moscow.144

The editors' favouring of the traditional notion of an academic education did not depend on the Cold War to justify itself. It remained based on a view, re-stated for Education Week that year, which believed that the basic purpose of school was to impart knowledge, something that was being muddied by recent additions to school curriculum.

> To some, perhaps, it may sound like another cliché to say that the fundamentals of true education remain constant in the Three Rs. But...this newspaper is going to go on insisting that most of the frills and fads and fancies with which public school is bedecked in these years are even worse than useless, because they clutter up the curriculum...145

This theme was repeated in further editorials during Education week, captured in the statement of one that "in the world there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind".146 The view did not go entirely unopposed in the correspondents column.147 The immediate editorial reply was to point to the costs of the program changes called for by the critic.148 The more fundamental rationale may have come in the editorial consciously written to mark the last day of that school year, an editorial whose assumption about the purposes of education and the relationship of education to democracy might have drawn a warm response from Hilda Neatby and all her circle as described by L. G. Thomas.

> Canada has no formally artificial "ruling caste," but she can and must produce a succession of young men and women who possess the qualifications for education and success, and who are willing to accept the responsibilities

> which those qualifications imply...those whose training should have given them the ability to think.149

There was no reference to Hilda Neatby but the central notion was identical, thus underlining again the existence of a coherent conservative education outlook of which a critic such as Hilda Neatby was a particular spokesperson and not the idiosyncratic creator.

The descriptions of the editorial and reader commentary on Hilda Neatby's views of progressive education in Canada, as reflected in these eight major provincial dailies from September 1953 to June 1954, provide the basis for tentative answers to the analytical questions about public opinion raised in the introduction to the chapter. These questions related to commonalities and differences in the pattern of the response over region and time. As well as broad findings of frequency and quantity of commentary it was anticipated that the materials might reveal suggestive differences in perspective and emphasis among commentators. Such findings might throw light on the parts of Hilda Neatby's educational critique and philosophy which elicited the strongest response from editors and correspondents as representatives of public opinion. This, in turn, might be expected to provide some tentative conclusions on the nature of conservative opinion on public education and whether these might have stood in a metaphorical sense for broader anxieties about the pace and nature of changes in national culture.

There was an evident regional difference in sheer amount of coverage given to controversy over the condition and direction of public education. The provincial dailies from the capitals of the three Prairie provinces carried far more material than the dailies selected to represent Pacific, Central and Eastern Canada. This survey concentrated on public opinion as reflected in editorials and reader correspondence. The Western dailies, the Edmonton Journal and the Winnipeg Free Press, carried the greatest number of editorial dealing with progressive education, while in Central Canada the Globe and Mail carried least. On the question of the general editorial stance towards progressive education all newspapers surveyed except the Globe and Mail were critical of progressive education. There was not, however, an equal tendency to associate concerns over progressive education with Hilda Neatby and So Little For the Mind. The equation of a controversy over public schooling with the particular opinions of Hilda Neatby was highest in the editorial statement of the three prairie newspapers and the Montreal Gazette. The editorial statements of the Halifax Chronicle Herald, so remarkable in their paralleling of some of Hilda Neatby's major themes, reflected no sense of a need to use her name in order to give identity or currency to their arguments in favour of traditional ways.

A consideration of the number of readers' letters which were evidently concerned with the controversy between progressive and traditional education suggests a slightly altered pattern from that implied by the editorial opinion. Once again the frequency of response was highest in the Prairie provinces, but sharp exchanges of reader opinions on progressive education and Hilda Neatby were also to be found in the Globe and Mail as well as the Montreal Gazette. The Halifax Chronicle once again represented something different in the general absence of readers' letters, not only on progressive education but almost any other of the kinds of public issues that seemed to so stir readers elsewhere. Regarding the perspective taken by correspondents in other newspapers towards Hilda Neatby's criticisms of progressive education the most obvious point suggested by this newspaper material is that not all correspondents agreed with her. Most correspondents did support her views, however, as illustrated in a number of cases where a declared opposition to her views by one correspondent brought several strong replies from others. This pattern occurred somewhat later in the Globe and Mail compared to the others, a reflection of an apparent time lapse in the perception of schooling in Ontario as a matter of controversy rather than self- congratulation.

Shifts in the frequency and character of the commentary on education and Hilda Neatby in particular reflected a mix of common and local circumstances that year. In all areas of Canada in the fall of 1953 provincial school systems, particularly in the major cities that were the home of the major provincial newspapers, experienced a mixture of pride and alarm at the sudden jumps in enrollments as the leading edge of the post-war baby boom entered public school. This provided the occasion for many editorials in early September to talk of risks as well as hopes as provincial departments of education grappled with changes in curriculum and teacher certification aimed at dealing with the press of numbers, as in the Winnipeg Free Press for example. The publication of So Little For the Mind in late October brought editorial reviews or reaction in a number of papers which in turn sometimes marked the immediate beginning of exchanges of views in the correspondents column, as in the Regina Leader Post. The third common circumstance was the timing of Education Week during the second week of March, 1954, which particularly led to a higher level of coverage and commentary if Hilda Neatby herself or the ideas of So Little For the Mind were specifically involved in a local address or panel discussion, as reflected in the Montreal Gazette. In addition each jurisdiction had its own calendar of teachers' conventions which often featured sessions dealing with Hilda Neatby's criticisms. In examining the Globe and Mail one can detect a marked increase in concerned if not critical commentary on progressive education following the Secondary Teachers conference in the Spring of 1954. One province, Alberta, had a strong progressive education critic of its own, Dr. W. G. Hardy of the University of Alberta, whose syndicated articles appeared in a number of provincial dailies, including the Edmonton Journal at the mid-point of the school-year, thus renewing reader and editorial comment. The same effect can be perceived in the Winnipeg Free Press as result of the meeting there in spring of 1954 of the Learned Societies of Canada with a special session on So Little For the Mind.

On the critical question of the reflection of the ideas of So Little For the Mind in the editorial and reader commentary, it is apparent that the set of integrated ideas making up Hilda Neatby's educational conservatism were subject to being separated out and then refracted through the particular concerns and world views of many different groups and individuals. Intellectual concerns appeared in two distinct forms. Many correspondents wrote exclusively in terms of the basic skills of literacy and computation as these were required for becoming a competent and serviceable member of the working force. Almost always associated with that view was an emphasis upon certain moral attitudes of effort and patience which implied a view of life as a struggle and a competition in the face of limitations, both personal and social. The other separate form in which this issue appeared was over the educational arrangements for the most able students. In this case the corollary reflected a broad political rather than moral outlook since the matter of education for the gifted was seen as having implications for the nature of leadership in a democracy. Whereas Hilda Neatby had defined such political implications of her view in broad, non-partisan ways, in at least one region of Canada, British Columbia, the debate over progressive education was highly politicized. Elsewhere in the country very occasional letters gave their concern over progressive education an apocalyptic flavor in more of a religious than a political sense.

The responsibility of the school to act as the chief agency for cultural transmission, understood as knowledge of the events and works that represented high accomplishment of mind and spirit in western, and particularly British, historical experience was one of Hilda Neatby's main themes. The clearest and most consistent voice for this outlook came in the editorials of the Montreal Gazette and Halifax Chronicle Herald. The series of articles by W. G. Hardy in the Edmonton Journal also seemed to spring from alarm and anger at the erosion of educational support for the legitimacy and necessity of such cultural knowledge. These writers were the exception for the consistency and centrality they gave to this concern. Most editorials and letters from those who appeared to see Hilda Neatby as a spokesperson for their concerns concentrated on functional matters of competence and behavior. The central place that Hilda Neatby gave to knowledge and her clear sympathy for knowledge of the historical and cultural experience of western civilization was generally absent. Perhaps Protestant Quebec and Atlantic Canada might be expected to have strong political and cultural reasons for deep attachments to a knowledge of the British inheritance. There was strong evidence from newspapers in all regions of the importance of British ties to the sense of Canadian identity at this time. It remained problematic, however, whether this necessarily translated into a conscious view of the importance of transmitting the memory of the cultural and historical experience of this group as part of the criticism to be levelled at progressive education in Canada.

The question of the relationship of the critical commentary to any differences between Canadian and American values seemed relatively unexamined by the writers themselves. Hilda Neatby's view that progressive education assumed a set of values, particularly political values, which were American and not Canadian was not detectable in these materials. Editors clearly felt that their readers would accept a statement by a prominent American educator, particularly a college president, as a suitable occasion for endorsing or disapproving what were seen as parallel trends in Canada. Even those who argued for an elitist relationship between education and democracy did not at any time put their arguments, as Hilda Neatby did, within the context of different political heritages in the two societies, except occasionally in the context of distancing themselves from the excesses of McCarthyism in the United States. It remains unwarranted, however, to assume from this that these writers did in fact see no difference in the ethos of the two societies. Unstated differences might as likely reflect ideas that were unexamined rather than uncontested.

Such uncertainty represents the limitations on hypothesizing whether the public debate aroused by Hilda Neatby's criticism of progressive education in Canada can be viewed as a metaphor for broader anxieties about the pace and nature of change in Canada. The most suggestive evidence that such a conjunction might exist lies in the character and quantity of the evidence surveyed here. Within the limits of space and time that were noted, the evidence of public concern about the future condition of some key national values of mind and character stretched from coast to coast. More importantly, that concern was focussed. It turned around, reflected on, reacted to and supported a particular set of ideas about education, about both progressive and traditional education, associated with one person, Hilda Neatby.

There truly was a national debate whose manifestations in the daily newspapers of Canadians provided a unique expression of the distribution of views on public education and philosophies of education. The quantity and content of the commentary by editors and readers on Hilda Neatby's critique of progressive education and appeal for a return to what she regarded as the traditional values of Canadian education provide substantial evidence of support for conservative notions of schooling. Equally important, that evidence made it clear there was no single monolithic form of educational conservatism in Canada. Hilda Neatby's educational conservatism had acted not only as a lightning rod for public opinion, but as a prism to show the variegated nature of the conservative philosophy of education in Canada. If Hilda Neatby did not wholly define educational conservatism in Canada, she enabled the kinds of educational conservatism in the nation to define themselves.

NOTES

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107 "Elementary Schools Inefficient?", Toronto Daily Star, 6 March 1954, p. 6.

108 "Defend Neatby Book", Toronto Daily Star, 30 March 1954, p. 6.

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136 "Liberal Education", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 4 September 1953, p. 4.

137 "The Greeks Had a Word For It", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 28 September 1953, p. 4.

138 "The Vast Kingdom of the Mind", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

139 "At the Foundations", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 8 October 1953, p. 4.

140 The first occasion on which Hilda Neatby's name and views appeared in that year was a reprint on Nov. 6 of the editorial "Starved by Education" from the Montreal Gazette, 3 November 1953.

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143 See "In the Name of Education!", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 2 February 1954, p. 4, "Education Goals", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 3 February 1954, p. 4, "Is Education Deficient?", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 16 February 1954, p. 4.

144 "Educational Philosophies", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 20 February 1954, p. 4.

145 "The Constant Fundamentals", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 6 March 1954, p. 4.

146 "The Day of The Three Fs", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 8 March 1954, p. 4.

147 "Filled With Dismay", Halifax Chronicle Herald, 15 March 1954, p. 4.

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CHAPTER VIII

This investigation's contribution to the history of ideas in Canada is based on certain assumptions about national cultural traditions in North America and the significance that traditional archetypes of human nature and purpose may have for contemporary public debate. The nature of these assumptions is illustrated most clearly by considering the approach of R. W. B. Lewis to the history of ideas in the United States.

> There may be no such thing as "American experience"; it is probably better not to insist that there is. But there has been experience in America, and the account of it has its own specific form. That form has been clearest and most rewarding when it has been most dialectical. Only recently has the dialogue tended to die away...Our culture will at the very least be a great deal drearier without it.1

In this view, establishing the legitimacy of a tradition of ideas in a national culture does not depend on proving the entire uniqueness of that tradition but upon showing that what was written and said represented a genuine response to and expression of national experience. Furthermore, showing the importance of a particular tradition of viewing human nature to public debate in the past raises questions about the impact of the relative presence or absence of that philosophical outlook to the adequate range of public discussion today. In relation to these broad observations on the history of ideas this study has demonstrated that the form of conservatism presented by Hilda Neatby in So Little For the Mind reflected very significant elements of conservative thought which were both national and trans-national. Further, the degree of public response suggests that this conservative critique of some of the tendencies of modern industrial society was viewed as an essential element to healthy discussion on social trends and the most appropriate design of public education, an outlook on the dialectic of public debate which may have implications for our own time.

The main purpose of the investigative work was to create the basis for a fresh consideration of the evolution of the conservative tradition in educational thought in Canada in the period of the progressive education movement. This required establishing that a body of thought sufficiently substantial in both its support and its content continued to exist. The "Neatby debate" appeared to offer a good opportunity for an examination of the nature of the conservative philosophy of education in Canada from the perspective of a particular point in time. The extensiveness of Hilda Neatby's own critique and the variety of conservative commentary aroused would make possible an analysis of how that tradition viewed itself. The timing and the scale of the debate were both important to anticipating the kind of knowledge about conservative philosophies of education in Canada which might be gained from such an investigation. The dimension of the public response to So Little For The Mind was unique in the history of education, described by Hugh Stevenson as "the first really heated national debate on public education in Canada on something other than a religious issue".2 The timing was important because the introduction of revised curricula across the country had made some mixture of mixture of progressivism and vocationalism into the new orthodoxy in education.

The investigation into the relationship of the Neatby debate to conservative thought in Canada began from this point with a consideration of the nature of the conflicting claims about this new orthodoxy. On the one hand, its proponents believed that it contained within itself all the necessary elements of conservatism and liberalism in the designing of public schooling that society required for its functioning. On the other hand, the public response to Hilda Neatby's So Little For the Mind suggested that there were a number of different forms of conservatism which did not feel adequately represented in the new conventional wisdom. Existing historical syntheses already suggested that the character of support for the new initiatives towards progressive education in Canada was more complex than indicated in the preliminary reports of its promoters. To assist in clarifying this a closer study was made of the implementation process in two provinces, Alberta and Ontario, selected because of the special, though different, roles each played in the national pattern. From this arose a number of hypotheses about the variety of impact that might be expected to accompany different aspects of the implementation process and hence the multiple conservative responses that would correspond to these initiatives. The comparative analysis of experiences with the progressive education movement in Alberta and Ontario suggested that there would likely be regional differences in reaction. Additionally, within this geographical distribution a variety of types and levels of concern might be expected: parents alarmed that new approaches for mastery of fundamentals by indirect means might set their children at risk; conservative politicians wishing to rein in the rhetoric of social reconstruction; teachers feeling the stress of raised expectations based on methods for which they felt insufficiently trained; academic groups witnessing the apparent erosion of the habits of mind and attitude in the school systems that had sustained the concept of an educated person to which their institutionalized status was dedicated; cultural nationalists who wanted to retain a hierarchy of values that marked the Canadian effort to preserve another kind of experience in North America. All of these were potential collaborators with Hilda Neatby in her conservative critique of progressive education and suggested the potential value of the basic question of the research, "Why was there so strong a public response to So Little For the Mind and what did that signify?"

The catalyst for that debate was Hilda Neatby's own educational conservatism as set out in So Little For the Mind and, one year later, in A Temperate Dispute. Whereas commentators have paid most attention to the nature of her criticisms a particular effort was made to reconstruct her own ideas on what schooling should consist of, especially at the secondary level, as represented in her desire to conserve a particular ideal, the "educated person". She expressed alarm at how far short of this ideal were most contemporary students and made an equation between high levels of intellectual rigour allied to cultural knowledge on the one hand and the proper moral seriousness towards life on the other. This shortfall, in her view, reflected a decline created by the growing attention paid to the views of John Dewey, made worse by Canadian educators not genuinely grappling with some of the political, intellectual and spiritual values that accompanied his more accessible aphorisms. She protested that the traditional forms of relationship between culture and democratic society were different in Canada and the United States and that social adjustment had taken the place of Christian tension. These failures of understanding by the educators were a reflection, she believed, of the lack of breadth and depth in their personal level of general learning and culture, a situation reflected in the courses of study they prescribed for Canadian public school systems.

She put forward a view of democracy that emphasized the unfettered selection of leaders who had demonstrated their aptitude and inclination for high thinking by their capacity to grapple with the highest works of the western intellectual tradition. Referring to the writings of other commentators on contemporary culture, most notably T. S. Eliot, Hilda Neatby worked her way through the issue of the different roles played by revealed religion and cultural tradition as sources of spiritual values. This led her in turn to reflect on the tension that was at the heart of the highest thinking and living, the tension between the autonomous reason and intellect of the individual on the one hand and the free acceptance of the transmitted values from the past on the other.

To train the mind outside a knowledge of and regard for objective values, particularly as represented in the great intellectual works of the west, would be to lose the only means men had to chart and measure progress in the quality of individual and national life.

In addition, and sooner rather than later, it would also lead to a questioning of the need for effort and sacrifice through the erosion of the belief that self-development required reverence for an external and transmitted standard of behavior and knowledge. For Hilda Neatby only the content and arrangements of liberal education could create the kind of private intellect which operated in a genuinely dialectical relationship with the concept of culture as a pursuit of ideals of perfection outside oneself. These ideals were embedded in a particular form of learning on the model of traditional liberal education which in turn went back further to the tension between individual conscience and doctrinal authority that mattered so much to Protestantism.

There was very little in Hilda Neatby's position that reflected anxieties related to considerations of the Cold War or perceived threats to the economic ideology of capitalism. When she criticized an over-emphasis on the value of equality within democracy the context was the vulgarization of culture not the sharing of wealth. There was an equal tone of "betrayal of the intellectuals", focussed, however, not on the erosion of national security but the undermining of a model of cultivated learning which supplied the values and standards by which to validate other elements of national life. Her concept of the kind of educational designs that should be conserved was not essentially different from that put forward by many of the academic critics in the United States.

From the examination of the critical statements of such writers as Smith, Bell, Lynd, Bestor, Hutchins and Woodring a broad conservative philosophy of education emerged that made clear the similarity in concerns with Hilda Neatby's critique. The outlook was based upon a view of the existing age as unstable and restless, increasingly dominated by a mass culture which threatened both national strength based on intellectual schooling and national culture embodied in the great literary and moral works from the past. It regarded progressive education as responsible for aggravating these trends in modern culture, particularly through a deemphasis upon the intellectual values as defined in the academic disciplines and transcendental values as associated with the Christian religion. The proposed solution called for a common curriculum for all, based on conserving the intellectual values of liberal education, which in turn reflected a view of education as training in the imitation of external models of thought and behavior.

Such a view of education could be set within a broad conservative philosophy that had expressed concern over the general development of democratic culture in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century, as described in studies by Richard Hofstadter, Edgar Gumbert and Joel Spring. This revival of academic conservative writing in the United States in the 1950s added weight to the hypothesis that the criticism of progressive education in the United States reflected something more substantial and complex in its conservatism than traditional explanations implied. This underlined the trans-national nature of much of the content and pattern of conservative concerns over progressive education in the United States and those raised in the Neatby debate in Canada. Yet it is also not in doubt that Hilda Neatby believed her position represented support for a set of ideas that were very important clues to the separate experience of Canada and the United States.

Reconstructing the context of Hilda Neatby's claim to represent a cultural outlook that distinguished the dominant values of Canadian national life from those in the United States involved establishing that such a tradition had indeed existed as a cohesive and influential philosophy within Canadian intellectual life up to that time. Earlier assessments of the significance of the Neatby debate had not investigated this dimension of her claims because they had already discounted the arguments themselves. Yet Hilda Neatby insisted that the ideas she sought to conserve had played a very important role in Canada, creating perspectives different from those promoted by progressive education. Drawing on the recent work of scholars, especially A. B. McKillop, in the field of the history of ideas in Canada the study identified philosophic idealism as that set of ideas about national culture and its relationship to education within which might be located the tradition that Hilda Neatby sought to preserve.

What gave this set of ideas a unique influence among the intellectual and cultural leaders of Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the stature of its main philosophic spokesman, John Watson of Queen's, and the appeal of an idealized British imperial mission for which it provided both conceptual framework and vocabulary. John Watson's Kantianism provided an intellectual synthesis for those troubled by the conflicting currents of faith and naturalism at the turn of the century. The character of this philosophical idealism was profoundly teleological. Central to it was a belief that at its best human reason could identify the transcendental ends for which life was meant to be lived and that study of the record of man's greatest actions and creations was the most appropriate education for all, but especially society's future leaders. There was tension here between man's rational powers and his desire for clear moral purpose but also a clear faith that individual intellects would re-discover the same notions of the best way to live as those whose writings made up the Western intellectual tradition, particularly in its classical stage. In Canada at the beginning of this century the most powerful contemporary metaphor for this sense of voluntary subordination of self to a model of human enterprise larger than one's own country and generation was the idealized concept of British imperial mission expressed by spokesmen like George Parkin. When this concept experienced decline after the Great War the general authoritativeness of the assumptions of philosophic idealism also was affected. Yet the influence of its ideas carried over the break that World War I represented in so many pre-war values of Canadian society.

In the form of a continuing belief in universal standards of behavior and belief that could provide orientation for the policies of major public institutions the influence of a broad idealist outlook persisted into the interwar period. Spokespersons such as Sir Robert Falconer might represent the narrower band of those who sought to uphold philosophic idealism as a system even as its reputation began to decline among professional philosophers. Continuing from the period before the war there was another group of intellectuals, however, whom Douglas Owram called "the government generation" who sought to promote the notion of the state as moral agent, advised by its intellectuals as guardians of society's highest corporate values now threatened by the emergence of social and ideological antagonisms thrown up by the emerging mass industrial society. This idea was explicitly explored in John Watson's later writings but can be found also in residual but clearly identifiable form among the elite of Canadian public and intellectual life in the interwar period. Observers such as A. B. McKillop and Hugh Hood in particular claimed that the underlying attitudes of philosophic idealism continued to exert an important influence on Canadian values right up to the present, embedded in the anxiety to find a moral middle ground between the autonomy of the individual will and intellect and the social importance of preserving a particular set of values about how best to live.

When one reduces a complex set of ideas like philosophic idealism to a single idea there are considerable risks in attributing membership in that tradition on that basis alone. Nonetheless, the quality of tension over the balance to be found between the autonomous intellect and its cultural heritage was central to Hilda Neatby's educational conservatism. Arising from this fundamental element in her thinking came all the other elements that can find correspondences in the evolution of philosophic idealism. In particular they stress the role of the school in transmitting the knowledge of society's cultural heritage and promoting that kind of academic education which would produce independent and reflective intellects to guide, if not to be, the decision-makers of society.

Further suggestion of this association was found through a reconstruction of the loose yet intimate network of individuals who acted as the most continuing interpreters and spokespersons of the Canadian intellectual experience up to the time of the immediate post-World War II period. The most defining circumstance was the very small size of the academic elite in Canada. This made possible a degree of informal association that caused decision makers in different areas of national life to act upon a shared perspective. Contributing to this sense of shared perspective was a fairly common social background in an age before significant state support existed for post-secondary study. This was extended through commonalities in post-graduate study and professional contact arising from the close association between government service and academic life. The outcome described by Doug Owram and Lewis G. Thomas was a fairly intimate intellectual community. Thus the expressed values and attitudes of Hilda Neatby's group within this community might be taken as an important clue to the tradition of ideas on education she wanted to conserve. The ideas of this group were sought first in the statements of particular individuals who were close friends and then in the major synthesis of the Canadian experience to be found in the writings of that generation of Canadian historians to which she belonged.

Hilda Neatby's circle shared a strong sense of British connections. The material and social conditions of her own childhood in rural Saskatchewan before the First World War might naturally thought to have given this particular cultural tie a special importance in her own case. The group as a whole shared some important assumptions on proper social structure which in turn reflected a particular view of democracy and its relationship to schooling. They saw democracy as a means of identifying "national" leaders based on qualities of character and ability, with particular stress on academic abilities that valued intellectual pursuits.

The presence of these broad elements was detected in the work of the larger community of professional historians such a Frank Underhill, Arthur Lower and Donald Creighton. They were sympathetic to the notion of an intellectual elite to act as guides for society, concerned about the growing influence of American popular culture upon Canadian social values, and alarmed at the erosion of their concept of liberal individualism. Outside this community of historians but one of the great Canadian conservative writers of this generation in his own right was George Grant, who analyzed the competing impulses within the Canadian conservative tradition as it was caught between the desire to preserve a set of cultural values different from the republic to the south and the acquisitive impulses excited by sharing a sub-continent of natural resources with that republic. Most of his forecasts about the outcome were gloomy and yet there was an inextinguishable belief in conserving the idea of an ideal standard outside ourselves by which we defined our most genuine development. This same grounding of conservatism upon a belief in the need to set limits on human nature by recognizing a power outside the self was a clear part of the writings of W. L. Morton, professional associate and personal friend of Hilda Neatby. He traced the distinctive stages through which Canadian conservatism had evolved and argued energetically that conservative values were needed in his own time to preserve a certain model of the cultivated individual. Attached to an even more focussed version of this ideal and directly involved in Hilda Neatby's project to conserve this model within Canadian education was Vincent Massey. Through his admiration for a particular form of cultural life that had emerged in nineteenth century England he paralleled and supported Hilda Neatby's cultural conservatism.

That outlook had found its best definition for Hilda Neatby in the ideas of mid-Victorians like Matthew Arnold and Cardinal Newman, somewhat less so in some of the writings of T. S. Eliot. The latter's opposition to modern liberalism led him to an assault on rationalism and democracy with which Hilda Neatby felt uneasy. She was much more comfortable with Matthew Arnold's concept of culture in something broader than theological terms and with his belief in the role of a constantly renewed group of intellectuals to represent and promote the notion of perfection in thought, feeling and expression for its own sake. This belief in the value of intellectual activity as an end in itself had been the central idea in Cardinal Henry Newman's lecture on University Education from which Hilda Neatby took the title of her critique. It seems likely that within that work she found an ethos of private dedication to the life of the mind that captured the wellspring of her personal commitment to conservative ideal. Hilda Neatby did not depend entirely on contemporaries, then, for her conservative view of the nature of education.

The analysis of the evolution of philosophic idealism described an intellectual tradition whose major elements so closely paralleled many of Hilda Neatby's views as to suggest a genuine lineage of ideas. Ideas must be maintained by particular groups and individuals, however. The examination of the nature of Canada's intellectual community in the interwar years, along with a description of the major values and attitudes of Hilda Neatby's personal and professional associates strengthened that linkage. Hilda Neatby emerged as the spokesperson for a set of conservative views on education and society that represented a major tradition in the history of ideas in Canada, a tradition whose broad ideas continued to be strongly promoted in Canada's academic community. The accusation that the conservatism was merely a bandwagon effect from events in the United States could now be set aside. What still remained to be determined was how far Hilda Neatby's own emphasis on this tradition of ideas was reflected in the public response to So Little For the Mind.

The public response to Hilda Neatby's criticism of progressive education in Canada was reported and analyzed on the basis of editorial statements and readers' letters in major Canadian provincial newspapers during the school year in which So Little For the Mind was published. This approach raised a number of important issues of interpretation and legitimate inference but still permitted some trends to reveal themselves that threw interesting light on a number of hypotheses. In both quantity and critical tone the public concern in the Prairie provinces was much higher than in Ontario, a pattern which appeared to reflect the public perception of how far progressive education had been implemented in the school system of each region. The distribution of concerns raised in this public commentary suggested strongly that educational conservatism could be quite as varied in its forms and focus as progressive education ever was. Many statements were concerned with student mastery of basic skills. This often accompanied the promotion of a moral outlook which stressed effort and struggle. Other writers, though fewer, were concerned about adequate training for leadership. There were some extremely strong voices on behalf of schooling conceived as the transmission of knowledge of the western, especially English speaking, cultural tradition but the strength came from the eloquence of individual speakers among the editorialists and not generally the numbers among the letter writers. Of these spokespersons perhaps W. G. Hardy represented part of that particular British social enclave in western Canada to which L. G. Thomas had alluded and into which Hilda Neatby fitted so well. There was indeed strong general evidence of the interest in British affairs but low evidence, except for a specific reference to the dropping of British history courses in Manitoba's curriculum, of alarm over the impact of revised curricula on maintaining a knowledge of the British experience as part of the Canadian identity. Paralleling this was the slight degree of commentary on the issue of differences between Canadian and American values, which Hilda had emphasized. Such patterns in the evidence did not permit using the public response to the educational issue of So Little For the Mind as a clue to larger anxieties about changes in the self-perception of Canada as British North America.

If the evidence from the public response to Hilda Neatby's statements did not throw as much light as hoped on national identity in terms of relations with other nations, it did make clear a wide and vigorous concern over key values in the national identity related to intellect and moral values in the schools. These forms of educational conservatism in Canada were often quite different in their emphasis from the conservatism of Hilda Neatby. The responses to Hilda Neatby's criticism made clear that there was no single kind of educational conservatism in Canada. The responses were as varied as the different regional interactions of political and social culture with the implementation of progressive education. Yet the catalyst for them all had been the major re-statement of the conservative tradition in So Little For the Mind and if the emphasis was sometimes different from that of Hilda Neatby each can be placed within one facet or other of the tradition of ideas she represented. It was a measure of the meaningfulness of that tradition that it could be interpreted and applied in such a variety of ways. It was a reflection of the complex yet integrated nature of that tradition that so many kinds of conservatives could all feel that their concerns were reflected in So Little For the Mind.

It deserves to be re-emphasized that the legitimacy of that Canadian tradition of educational conservatism did not depend on demonstrating the entire uniqueness of that tradition but upon showing that what was written and said represented a genuine response to Canadian experience. This gives rise to a general concern that the field of the history of education might itself be falling short in its possible contribution to informed decision making in education through a comparative neglect of the historical evolution of conservative views of education in Canada.

This concern should be set within the context of the approaches to research in the history of education in Canada since Bernard Bailyn challenged educational historians in Education in the Forming of American Society (1960) to revise their approach to their subject. As well as a call to broader descriptions of public education by including the efforts and concerns of educational initiatives outside the school, he urged refreshing the explanations of public education. This required a critical revision of prevailing Whiggish ideology which viewed the history of education as an account of the triumph of "reformers" over "conservatives". In an essay written in 1975 Neil Sutherland tried to clarify the watershed between the moderate and radical revisionists.3 The first group, he believed, though sharing doubts about just how much human betterment has or can be accomplished by education and questioning whether claims by innovators of change and improvement could be substantiated, yet also in general showed a belief that education in modern society has "worked". Sutherland saw the radical revisionists as rejecting these assumptions. They believed that the school had never been intended as a way to equalize opportunity and that, on the contrary, systems of mass education had been consciously designed to maintain the existing social hierarchy's influence over decision making and control over resources. Unquestionably both kinds of revisionist historians would wish to emphasize how strongly many of the statements and claims by conservatives in the Neatby debate were infused with the motive of control, whether openly in the emphasis upon basic learning and discipline in the classroom or indirectly through insistence on the importance of cultural literacy in the major works of the western intellectual tradition. Yet the very ease with which this sentiment can be illustrated may demonstrate a limitation of the revisionist stance as an interpretive position. The revisionist stance continues to regard freedom and control as mutually exclusive expressions of what is desirable and undesirable. The advance it makes on the traditional Whig outlook is that it provides a basis for testing the authenticity of claims of improvement made by reformers. Essentially, however, the Whig dichotomy, wherein freedom was seen as good and control as evil, remained intact. It is precisely at this point that a reconstitution of the conservative tradition demonstrates its potential contribution to the interpretation of Canadian educational history inasmuch as the conservative tradition is founded most basically upon the legitimacy and desirability of control for the good of public life.

The fact that such a reflection on the significance of Hilda Neatby's conservative critique may have implications for historiography in the United States as well as Canada underlines again the importance of the trans-national character of the philosophical position she represented. Along with the key role that position was clearly seen to occupy in public debate in the early 1950s in both Canada and the United States, there emerges a strong suggestion that such a philosophical position might continue to play an essential role for healthy public debate about North American life today. The value of such a standpoint in educational experience has been increasingly suggested by a number of modern North American commentators who have become concerned about the erosion of a consensus of knowledge and values necessary for the maintenance of a public culture in a period of increasing emphasis upon relativism and individual self-fulfillment. In his 1977 study, the Fall of Public Man, Richard Sennett claimed to detect a trend of withdrawal from active participation in public life in favour of a search for areas of expression centered on strong private feelings. He believed that the outcome would be the opposite of that predicted by The Lonely Crowd (1952).

> Riesman believed American society, and in its wake western Europe was moving from an inner - to an outer - directed condition. The sequence should be reversed. Western societies are moving from something like an other-directed condition to an inner-directed condition - except that in the midst of self-absorption no one can say what is inside.4

The type of individualism described here was not "rugged individualism" but anxiety about individual feeling and self-needs. Sennett saw this as part of the impact of industrial capitalism through the intensification of emotional relationships within the nuclear family and the "confusion" over differences in outward signs of class differences due to mass production. These led to an erosion of elements of formal, outward civility necessary to the healthy public life of a society.

The belief that absorption in private feelings was the mark of an uncivilized society appeared also in The Culture of Narcissism (1978) by Christopher Lasch. He faulted developments in public schooling for a decline in the cultural literacy necessary to maintain the cultivated, impersonal conventions needed for cosmopolitanism and civility.

> ...the democratization of culture...has contributed to the decline of critical thought and the erosion of intellectual standards, forcing us to consider the possibility that mass education, as conservatives have argued all along, is intrinsically incompatible with the maintenance of educational quality.5

The final effect of this decline in knowledge and regard for cultural tradition was seen as more than the erosion of conventions of public behavior. It involved the spread of a way of thinking in society that by its very nature de-legitimized any traditional notions of codes or principles that represented transcendental limits on making individual self-satisfaction the main guide to social behavior.

> In a society that has reduced reason to mere calculation, reason can impose no limits on the pursuit of pleasure...For the standards that would condemn crime or cruelty derive from religion, compassion, or the kind of reason that rejects purely instrumental applications; and none of these outmoded forms of thought or feeling has any logical place in a society based on commodity production.6

Like Sennett, then, Lasch is talking about an older, deeper conservatism than is implied by or even consistent with the conservatism of capitalist economic interest.

In the 1980s this conservative concern over a general crisis in liberal capitalist societies continued to be reflected in substantive academic works. William L. Sullivan (Reconstructing Public

Philosophy, 1982) argued that the instrumentalism of liberal societies was eroding the traditional social "imperatives" of loyalty and obligation and referred to "the crisis of legitimacy or, as it is sometimes called, the crisis of authority".7 C. A. Bowers, of the University of Oregon, described it as the need to correct a tendency in education in which the main purpose of reason became "the demystification of all cultural beliefs and traditions ...that threatens the foundations of culture and ultimately erodes the basis of belief itself".8 He complained that change had become associated with progress and thus "the forms of tradition that gave social life continuity, security, and a degree of civility have become increasingly associated with either obstructionists or romantic reactionaries."9 This had occurred, he believed, through an important transmutation in the meaning of individualism.

> ...the Puritan image of the individual ruled by a moral code that channeled energy into a social mission while enforcing self-denial has given way to a remissive, self-indulgent form of individualism where, in terms of the most extreme interpretation, "nothing is secret or sinful, nothing forbidden and consequently nothing authoritative, at either a social or individual level."10

The intellectual and spiritual tension at the heart of the earlier individualism had been allowed to slacken.

In 1987 public debate about the nature of public education and its relation to the continued existence of a genuinely social culture based on common understandings was stimulated by E. D. Hirsch's study Cultural Literacy.11 Even larger was the impact made in the same year by Allan Bloom's The Closing of the

American Mind.12 He argued that universities had failed to sustain an intellectual awareness of that tension of ideas which was the truest context for questions about human behavior. It was that same deeper form of conservatism which Hilda Neatby seemed personally most committed to and which was the foundation of her criticisms in So Little For the Mind. This perspective is the one that she wanted to restore to the Canadian public's debate on education.

There may not have been such a thing that can be distinguished at all points as a separate kind of "Canadian experience", but there has been experience in Canada and the account of it deserves to be separately told. Such is the case of the restatement of traditional ideals of education in Canada that arose from Hilda Neatby's publication of So Little For the Mind and its relationship to conservative thought in Canada.

NOTES

1 R. W. B. Lewis, The American Adam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), pp. 8-9.

2 Hugh A. Stevenson, "So Little For the Mind?Reaction and Reform in the Modern Curriculum," CSSE yearbook 1979, pp. 95-110.

3 Neil Sutherland, "Towards a History of English-Canadian Youngsters" in Education and Social Change, eds., Michael B. Katz and Paul H. Mattingly, (New York: New York University Press, 1975), pp. XI-XXXI.

4 Richard Sennett, The Fall of Public Man (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), p. 5.

5 Christopher Lasch, The Culture of Narcissism (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), p. 125.

6 Ibid., p. 69.

7 William M. Sullivan, Reconstructing Public Philosophy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 26-27.

8 C. A. Bowers, "Culture Against Itself: Nihilism as an Element in Recent Educational Thought," unpublished paper (University of Oregon: 1983), p. 4.

9 Ibid., p. 13.

10 Ibid., p. 9.

11 E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Cultural Literacy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987).

12 Allan Bloom, The Closing of the American Mind (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987).

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